



J. G. Kohl

Russia

St. Petersburg, Moscow,  
Kharkoff, Riga and  
Odessa, The German  
Provinces on the Baltic,  
The Steppes, The Crimea  
and the Interior of the  
Empire

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# RUSSIA

ST. PETERSBURG, MOSCOW,  
KHARKOFF, RIGA AND ODESSA,  
THE  
GERMAN PROVINCES ON THE BALTIC,  
THE STEPPES, THE CRIMEA,  
AND  
THE INTERIOR OF THE EMPIRE

BY  
J. G. KOHL



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## PREFACE.

THE volume here presented to the public contains an abstract of nine closely-printed volumes, descriptive of the general features and popular manners of a large portion of the Russian Empire. To bring the contents of those nine volumes within the compass of one, was a task of some difficulty; but the Editor flatters himself that it has been accomplished, without omitting any of the more interesting portions of the four original works, published in quick succession by their accomplished and lively author. To the generality of readers, this epitome will, probably, be a more welcome offering, than a more faithful, but, at the same time a far more voluminous translation, could have been.

The description of St. Petersburg has been given at much greater length than any of the other portions of the work; partly, because it was supposed that the capital would be an object of greater interest to the English public than the other parts of the empire; and partly because, in the Editor's opinion, Mr. Kohl's description of St. Petersburg is decidedly the best of his works on Russia.

\*\* The Maps and Plans which accompany the original works have not been given in the present translation, partly because they would materially increase the cost, and partly because such diminutive maps are very unsatisfactory. Readers who may desire them, will find the special Maps of Russia, and the Plans of St. Petersburg and Moscow belonging to the series published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, very superior to any which could have been introduced into this work.



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# ST. PETERSBURG.

## CHAPTER I.

### PANORAMA OF ST. PETERSBURG.

FORMED in early antiquity, and crystallized during the barbarism of the middle ages, our cities, with their narrow streets and many-cornered houses, with the hereditary inconveniences and anomalies of their architecture, look often like so many labyrinths of stone, in which chance alone disposed the dwellings; but in St. Petersburg, the offspring of a more enlightened age, every thing is arranged orderly and conveniently: the streets are broad, the open spaces regular, and the houses roomy. The fifty square versts destined for the Russian capital, allowed every house a sufficient extent of ground. In our old German towns, tall distorted buildings seem every where squeezing each other out of shape, and panting, as it were, for want of room to breathe in; whereas in St. Petersburg every house has an individuality of its own, and stands boldly forth

the ground, the lively green of the painted roofs, and the azure star-spangled cupolas of the churches, with their gilt spires, throw off their monotonous icy covering; the eye revels again in the long untasted enjoyment of colour, and the river, divested of its wintry garment, flows again in unrobed majesty, and gaily mirrors the palaces ranged along its banks.

As the city presents no elevated point, the spectator, to see it, must elevate *himself*, and for this purpose there is no place better suited than the tower of the Admiralty, from which the principal streets diverge, and near which the great arms of the river seem to meet. This tower is provided with a series of galleries, and the delightful views from those galleries on a fine spring day are not easily matched in any other city.

At the foot of the tower the inner yards of the Admiralty present themselves. There the timber from the forests of Vologda and Kostroma lies piled in huge heaps, and mighty ships of war are growing into life under the busy hands of swarms of workmen. On the other side lie the splendid squares or *plokhtshods* of the Admiralty, of Peter, and of the Court, along the sides of which are grouped the chief buildings of the capital. The Hotel de l'Etat Major, whence Russia's million of soldiers receive their orders; the Senate-house, and the Palace of the Holy Synod, in which the *meum* and *tuum*, the believing and rejecting, the temporal and the spiritual concerns of a hundred nations, are discussed and determined; St. Isaac's Church, with its profusion of columns, in which each stone is of colossal magnitude; the War-office, where a thousand pens ply their peaceful labours in the service of Mars; and the mighty Winter Palace, in a corner of which dwells the great man to whom one-tenth of the human race look up with hope or anxiety, and whose name is prized and dreaded, beyond any other, over one-half the surface of our globe.

The length of the open spaces bordered by the public buildings just mentioned, is not much less than an English mile, and the spectacles, metamorphoses, *tableaux vivans* and *ombres chinoises* which daily and hourly present themselves to the spectator who keeps watch upon the tower of the Admiralty, are as varied as they are magnificent and interesting. At one extremity, near the Senate and the Synod, stands the colossal equestrian statue of Peter the Great, trampling underfoot the dragon of barbarism, and ever ready to dash off at a full gallop from the rock, from the summit of which his charger appears to be in the act of springing. The heads of the state and of the church—metropolitans, senators, bishops, and judges—are constantly arriving and departing, their equipages keeping up an incessant movement around the immortal Peter. At the other extremity arises the smooth and polished monolith of the "Restorer of Peace to the World," on the summit of which stands the archangel with the cross of peace, while at its foot the rattling of imperial equipages scarcely ceases for a moment. Field-marsals, generals, governors, and gentlemen of the court, are constantly coming and going. Priestly processions, military parades, pompous equipages, and funeral trains, are thronging by at every hour of the day, and the drums and fifes are rarely silent, but continue, at brief intervals, to announce that a mighty man of the earth has just passed by.

To the south of the Admiralty the most important part of the city unfolds itself, the Bolshaia Storona, or Great Side. Towards the west lies Vasiliefskoi Ostrof, or Basilius Island, with its beautiful Exchange, its



Academy of Sciences, and its University. To the north is seen the Petersburgskaia Storona, or Petersburg Side, with its citadel stretching out into the Neva; and towards the east arise the barracks and factories of the Viborg Side. These are the four principal divisions of the city, formed by the Great and Little Neva, and by the Great Nefka. The Great Side comprises by far the most important portion of the capital, with the court, the nobility, and more than half the population. The least important is the Viborg Side, inhabited chiefly by gardeners, soldiers, and manufacturers. It is rapidly extending, however, for nowhere else in St. Petersburg are building speculations going on to a larger extent. The Basilius Island commerce appears to have selected for her especial residence, and the Muses have raised their temple by the side of Mercury's. The Petersburg Side, a low and marshy island, remarkable chiefly for its fortress or citadel, whose rayon drives the houses from the river-side, is inhabited by the poorer classes of the population, and has already assumed much of the character of a metropolitan faubourg.

The closely-built masses of the Great Side—closely built in comparison with the other quarters of the city—are divided into three semicircular divisions by the Moika, the St. Catherine, and the Fontanka canals. These divisions are called the First, Second, and Third Admiralty sections, and are again subdivided by the three principal streets diverging from the Admiralty: the Neva Perspective (Nevskoi Prospekt); the Peas Street (Gorokhovaia Oulitza); and the Resurrection Perspective (Vosnosenskoï Prospekt).

As these three principal streets meet at the foot of the Admiralty Tower, a man, taking his position at this central point, may look down them, and, with the aid of a good telescope, see what is going on in the most remote quarters of the city. The direction of these three streets and of the canals determine that of most of the other streets. Of these the most remarkable are the Great and Little Morskaia, the Great and Little Millionava, the Meshtshanskaia, and the Sadovaia or Garden Street. All the streets without exception are broad and convenient, blind alleys and narrow lanes being wholly unknown. They are classed, indeed, into prospekts, oulitzis, and perouloks, or cross streets, but even these perouloks would in any of our older towns be thought quite spacious enough for main streets. Every street has two names, a German and a Russian.

Beyond the Fontanka, along whose banks are ranged a succession of palaces, lie the more remote portions of the city; and beyond these, bordering on the swamps of Ingermanland may be dimly seen, through the mists of the horizon, the suburbs on the Ligofka and Zagarodnoi canals, together with the suburban villages of great and Little Okhta. Even these remote quarters, peopled by yemshtshiks, plotniks, and mushiks,\* bear no resemblance to the wretched abodes of poverty in most of our European cities. There are in London and Paris, and even in many German cities, quarters that seem the chosen domain of famine and misery, and where a filthy, ragged, insolent, and demoralized race of beings, are crowded into houses as dirty, as dilapidated, and as repulsive as themselves. Not so in St. Petersburg. Beggars, rag-gatherers, and half-naked cripples, are nowhere to be seen in the city graced by the imperial residence. Indeed, in none of the large cities of Russia is there to be seen

\* Waggoners, carpenters, and peasants.

a street population such as we have just described. Of this, the state of serfage in which the lower classes live is the cause. The poor are all in a condition of dependence; and that very dependence, while it impedes the workman in his attempts to raise himself, prevents the possibility of his falling so low as may sometimes be the case with a free labourer. In no city of Russia do we see the wretched hovels of poverty offering a painful contrast to the mansions of the wealthy, as may be seen in almost every city of Western Europe. The suburbs of St. Petersburg, where dwell the labouring classes, or the black people, as they are there called, have a desolate and uninviting air; still there is nothing repulsive or disgusting in them.

The roofs in St. Petersburg are generally flat, and few houses can boast of more than two floors; indeed the majority have only one, particularly in the remoter quarters. Even in the heart of the town many one-floored houses are seen, and houses of three or four floors are to be met with only in the three Admiralty sections. Now that ground-rents have risen so much, and the town is stretching itself out in every direction, loftier houses are beginning to be built, and additional floors are in some places erected over those that already exist. While I was in St. Petersburg some hundreds of houses underwent the process of having their roofs taken off, for the purpose of having additional floors added.

In the same way that the three *prospekts* diverge from the Admiralty Tower towards the south, the several arms of the Neva stretch away towards the north, and when the stranger with his telescope is tired of watching the dashing equipages on the one side, he may turn and contemplate the ships and gondolas on the other. Bridges there are but few over the Neva, and a man would, therefore, often have to go a round of several versts when he wanted to cross the river, were there not all along the banks a multitude of boats ready, for a few copeks, to convey him to the other side. These boats are mostly uncovered, and are rowed, by two men. Covered boats, however, with six, ten, and even twelve rowers are not wanting. The watermen ply their calling with much dexterity, and sometimes even entertain their passengers with songs and music. The court, the ministers, the nobles, and many of the public institutions, have their private barges, richly ornamented, and rowed by men in handsome liveries. The canals and the several arms of the Neva are as much animated by these boats as the streets by equipages; and, on Sundays, little fleets may be seen gliding away to the enchanted islands that form the favourite resort for amusement to the citizens of the Russian capital.

In the spacious arms of the Neva, the ships of war, as well as the merchant-vessels, find a spacious anchorage; they are not, therefore, crowded together, as is the case in some large maritime places, but lie grouped and scattered along the quays. These quays, again, are bordered by noble buildings; by the sumptuous mansions of the English Quay, by a range of palaces on Vassili Ostrof Quay, by the Exchange, the Corps\* of Cadets, the Academy of Sciences, the University, the Academy of Arts, the Corps of Cadets of the Mines, &c. All these buildings are pompous and of vast extent.

\* The *Kadetskoi Korpus*. The Russians apply the word "corps" not only to the young gentlemen themselves, but likewise to the building that serves them as a residence.

Peter the Great designed Vassili Ostrof from the first for the seat of commerce, and it was his intention to have intersected it with canals, after the fashion of Amsterdam, which in his judgment presented the very model for a commercial city. Some of these canals were actually cut, but were afterwards filled up again, and the whole plan was eventually abandoned. Vassili Ostrof, as it now stands, looks as unlike Amsterdam as any thing can well be imagined. The houses have the air of palaces; the clerks that move among them are all handsomely dressed, the equipages are elegant, and the streets unincumbered by drays or waggons. The warehouses of the merchants are either at Cronstadt, or, at all events, away from the dwelling-houses.

The Petersburg Island, which is in turn divided by smaller arms of the river from the Apothecary Island, the Petrofskoi Island, &c., owes its chief interest to the citadel, which from the tower of the Admiralty may be examined in all its details. It is well that the people of St. Petersburg have other things to think of, than the evident destination of this bristling fortress imbosomed in the very centre of their city, where it can command nothing but the town itself, and would be harmless to a foreign enemy. The citadel is certainly not maintained as a means of defending, but as a means of controlling, the city; as a refuge for the imperial family and the heads of the state, either in case of a foreign invasion, or of a domestic insurrection. Against an attack from the sea-side, St. Petersburg has no other fortification than Cronstadt. Should this ever be forced by a maritime foe, the defenceless capital will have more cause than her assailants to tremble at the dangerous weapon that she carries in her breast. Nor is such an event beyond the range of likelihood. England is the only great power with which there seems to be any probability that Russia will come into collision. The Russian Baltic fleet could not maintain itself against the combined fleets of England, Denmark, and Sweden. The Russian ships, after the loss of a battle, would have to retire behind Cronstadt. Should Cronstadt then yield, either to the gold or to the artillery of the enemy, the Russian garrison would be forced to seek shelter in the citadel, the English men-of-war would enter the Neva, and in the cannonade that would probably ensue, the finest part of the capital might be laid in ashes by the fire of its own citadel. The mortification of such a catastrophe would drive the government to realize the idea frequently entertained, of returning to the ancient capital, the City of the Czars, to the Kremlin of Moscow; Petersburg would shrink together into a mere maritime city of trade, and Vassili Ostrof would perhaps be all that would remain of it.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE ARCHITECTURE OF ST. PETERSBURG.

No modern city can boast that it is so entirely composed of palaces and colossal buildings as St. Petersburg. Even the dwellings of the poor have a show of magnificence about them. There are several houses in the

town in which thousands of human beings have their residence. The Winter Palace, for instance, has 6000 inhabitants; in the Infantry Hospital 4000 beds are made up; in the Foundling Hospital there are 7000 children; and in the Corps of Cadets there are some thousands of those young gentlemen. There are single houses from which their owners derive princely revenues. Of many the annual rental exceeds 50,000 rubles, of some 100,000. The ground occupied by the Corps of Cadets forms a square of which each side is about a quarter of an English mile in length. There are other buildings, such as the Admiralty, the Hotel de l'Etat Major, the Tauride Palace, &c., that occupy ground enough for a small town. Then come buildings of a second rank, such as the Smolnoi Convent; the Neva Convent; the Commercial Bank; several hospitals and barracks; the hemp, tallow, and other magazines; the Custom-house; the Senate; the Synod; the Marble Palace; the Imperial Stables; and the old palace of the Grand Duke Michael. Next come what may be called the buildings of a third rank: the large theatres, the large churches, the smaller hospitals, &c.

Among the private houses also are some of enormous extent. I knew one of which the ground-floor, on one side, was occupied by a public bazaar, in which thousands of the necessities and conveniences of life were offered for sale. On the other side, a multitude of German, English, and French mechanics and tradesmen had hung out their signs. On the first floor dwelt two senators, and the families of various other persons of distinction. On the second floor was a school of very high repute, and a host of academicians, teachers, and professors, dwelt there with their families. In the back part of the building, not to talk of a multitude of obscure personages, there resided several colonels and majors, a few retired generals, an Armenian priest, and a German pastor. Had all the rest of St. Petersburg gone to the ground, and this house alone remained, its inhabitants would have sufficed for the formation of a little political community of their own, in which every rank in society would have had its representatives. When such a house is burnt down, 200 families at once become roofless. To seek any one in such a house is a real trial of patience. Ask the *butshnik* (the policeman at the corner of the street), and he will tell you perhaps that his knowledge extends only to the one side of the house, but that the names of those who live in the other half are unknown to him. There are so many holes and corners in such a house, that even those who dwell in it are unable to tell you the names of all the inmates; and no man thinks another his neighbour, merely because they happen to live under the same roof. Many of these houses look unpretending enough when seen from the street, to which they always turn their smallest side; but enter the *podyāsde* or gateway, and you are astonished at the succession of side-buildings and back-buildings, of passages and courts, some of the latter large enough to review a regiment of cavalry in them.

Few of the houses in St. Petersburg, it has already been observed, exceed two floors in height, except in a few of the most central streets. A speculator some time ago built several houses of three stories, in one of the cross streets of Vassili Ostrof, and was completely ruined by the undertaking, for he could find no tenant who was willing to mount so high. On the other hand, even in the central parts of the city, there are not a few houses, of not more than one floor in height, belonging to wealthy individuals, who in the spirit of their national predilection spread themselves



out upon the ground, whereas a house of two stories containing the same number of rooms would only cost them half as much. The Russians have as great a partiality for wooden houses as for low houses, and perhaps with more reason. To a Russian particularly, a wooden house holds out a multitude of recommendations. Firstly, wood is more easily fashioned into the wished-for shape than stone; and then a wooden house is more quickly built, costs less, and is much warmer. The government discourages the erection of wooden houses in many ways; nevertheless, the majority of the houses in St. Petersburg, perhaps two-thirds, are still of wood.

The building of a house is a much more costly undertaking in St. Petersburg than in any other part of Russia. Provisions are dear, and the price of labour always comparatively high. Then the ground brings often enormously high prices. There are private houses, the mere ground of which is valued at 200,000 rubles, a sum for which, in other parts of the empire, a man might buy an estate of several square leagues, with houses, woods, rivers, and lakes, and all the eagles, bears, wolves, oxen, and human creatures that inhabit them. In particularly favourable situations for business as much as 1000 rubles a year has been paid by way of rent for every window looking out into the street. The next thing that renders building so costly, is the difficulty of obtaining a solid foundation. The spongy marshy nature of the soil makes it necessary for the builder to begin by constructing a strong scaffolding under ground, before he can think of rearing one over it. Every building of any size rests on piles, and would vanish like a stage ghost were it not for the enormous beams that furnish it support. Such is the pedestal on which stands the citadel with all its walls; and even the quays along the river-side, the foot pavements, and the framework of the canals, must be secured in a similar way. The foundation alone for the Isaac's Church cost upwards of a million of rubles, a sum for which a magnificent church might have been *finished* in most countries. Even with all this costly precaution, the builders do not always succeed in getting a solid basis to build on. After the inundation of 1824, the walls, in many houses, burst asunder, in consequence of the foundation having given way. The English Palace, as it is called, which lies on the road to Peterhof, has fairly separated from the steps leading up to it; either the palace has drawn itself back one way, or the steps the other. On all the fine quays the blocks of granite of which they are formed have settled more or less, and the street pavement in spring may be said to approach to a state of solution; when carriages drive over it the ground shakes like a bog, and, in many places, the stones rise up or sink into the earth, forming often the most dangerous holes.

Pine logs, laid horizontally on each other, furnish the usual material for the construction of the wooden houses. Stone houses are built either of bricks or of Finland granite. The brick-walls are of extraordinary thickness. In our part of Europe we have frequent occasion to wonder at the great height to which our architects venture to run up their thin walls; in Russia the wonder is reversed, for it is astonishing to see the thickness given to walls intended for so trifling an elevation. Five or six feet is no unusual thickness for a brick-wall in St. Petersburg. Granite is less suitable to architectural ornaments than marble, and is but little used by the Russians, who seldom care much for the solidity or durability of their constructions. A handsome outside, and pompous and spacious rooms, are the chief desiderata. Wood is the favourite material, and where this is

forbidden by the police, bricks are resorted to. Still, upon the whole, a huge quantity of granite has found its way from the Finnish swamps to the banks of the Neva since St. Petersburg was founded,\* and mighty blocks that had probably lain imbedded in the marshes for thousands of years, now display themselves proudly in the capital of the czars, in the shape of monoliths, pillars, cariatides, pedestals, &c. The airy sylphs of St. Petersburg, however, seem to have conspired, as much as the gnomes of the earth, against the architects of the city. It is quite afflicting to see how much the fine granite monuments frequently suffer from the effects of the atmosphere. The frosts of winter are particularly destructive. The moisture that finds its way during autumn into the pores of the stones, freezes in winter, and some of the largest stones are then rent and torn, and on the return of spring fall asunder. Most of the monuments of the capital have already suffered from this cause, and in another century will probably be falling into ruins. Even the magnificent Alexander column has in this way received an ugly rent.†

The Russian aristocracy, in general, do not reside in the central part of the town, in the vicinity of the imperial palace. They have been banished thence by the invasion of industry and the bustle of trade. It is in the Litanai, and along the sides of the Fontanka canal, particularly the eastern end of it, that the most fashionable residences will be found. It is there that may be seen the palaces of the Kotshubeys, the Sheremetievs, the Branitzkis, the Narishkins, the chancellors of the empire, the ministers, the grandees, and the millionaires, on ground where a century ago nothing met the eye but a few huts tenanted by Ingrian fishermen. A quiet and magnificent street has since arisen there, and the Orloffs, the Dolgorukis, the Stroganoffs, &c., have, it must be owned, displayed taste and judgment in their choice of a quarter wherein to erect their sumptuous dwellings. Their palaces are not crowded together, as in many of our more ancient capitals; on the contrary, nearly every house stands detached from its neighbours, with a handsome space in front for carriages to draw up, while the apartments within are numerous and spacious. Suites of rooms will be found in many of them fitted up as conservatories or winter gardens, a species of luxury in which the aristocracy indulge more perhaps in St. Petersburg than in any other city in the world. The largest of these winter gardens is at the imperial palace. Sometimes they are fitted up at a great expense for a single night, on the occasion of a ball, when the dancers may refresh themselves from the labours of pleasure, amid beds of flowers, or in arbours of delicious shrubs, cooled by fountains of living water.

The rapidity with which buildings are run up in St. Petersburg is truly astonishing. This is partly owing to the shortness of the season, during which building operations can be carried on, but partly also to the characteristic impatience of the Russians to see the termination of a work they have once commenced. The new winter palace is one of the most striking

\* Some idea may be formed of the immense quantity of granite brought to St. Petersburg, from the fact that the granite quays which enclose the river and the canals occupy alone a length of nearly twenty English miles.

† A note to an article on St. Petersburg in the *Foreign Quarterly Review* (No. LVI.) says: "We have received from St. Petersburg an official report, in which it is stated that the supposed fissure has been examined, and has been found to be merely an optical illusion."

examples of this. Within one year not less than twenty millions of rubles were expended upon the building. The operations were not even allowed to suffer interruption from the frosts of winter, but fires were kept burning every where to prevent the materials from freezing, and to dry the walls. The same system has been acted on with respect to many of the private mansions of the nobility. Palaces, in short, are put together with a rapidity that can be compared only to that with which theatrical decorations are arranged. This very rapidity, however, will make the city a more easy meal for old Father Time to devour at a fitting season. He will have ground the brittle columns of bricks and mortar to powder, some thousands of years before his teeth will have been able to make an impression on some of the monuments of Egypt. The Russians build only to prepare ruins. Indeed, it is painful, in most of their cities, to see the early decrepitude of so many buildings of a recent erection. They furnish a suitable picture of the precocious civilization of the empire. It must, at the same time, be admitted, that similar remarks will apply to the modern architecture of other parts of Europe.

Among the most magnificent ornaments of the mansions of St. Petersburg must not be forgotten the splendid plate glass of their windows. In most of the aristocratic saloons there is at least one large window composed of a single pane of glass, round which the ladies delight to range their work-tables, and their ottomans, whence they gaze out upon the animated *tableaux vivans* of the street. In some houses every window is fitted up on the same plan. They ought not, however, to be permitted on the ground-floor, for a poor milkmaid, or a porter with a load, passing by one of these costly windows, may be ruined by a single *faux pas*.

There is always a great desire shown to avoid architectural disfigurement. A Grecian temple, or some other fanciful decoration, when more closely examined, often turns out to be nothing but a set of painted boards, intended to mask some object not likely to please the eye. Sometimes, to give a more stately look to a one-floored house, the owner will place upon the roof the complete façade of an additional story, which, on nearer inspection, is found to be nothing but a mere wall with sham windows, the whole being fastened to the rest of the house with massive iron bars. Simulated floors of this kind may sometimes have been the work of the police, who occasionally order double-floored houses to be built in certain streets for the sake of uniformity; but the same thing may be met with in all parts of Russia and Poland, and seems perfectly suited to the character of the Slavonian nations, who are always more ready to promise than perform. Even the scaffolding around a house undergoing repair must be closed up with boards, and these boards are painted over with doors and windows, to cheat the eye into a belief that they compose the front of a *bonâ fide* house. To see the profusion of pillars and porticoes expended on most of the St. Petersburg houses, a stranger might imagine himself in Greece or Italy; but you look in vain for the peripatetics that should wander along these stately halls, or for the epicureans that ought to be sunning themselves there. Drifts of snow and piercing north winds howl among these Ausonian retreats during the greater part of the year, and make them as little suited for voluptuous loungers, as the stately balconies that are every where seen empty and deserted.

A Russian is easily tempted to make changes in his house, and the consequence is, that an abundance of building and unbuilding is at all times



going on in St. Petersburg. A single dinner or a ball often causes a house to put on a new face. To augment the suite of rooms, a hole will perhaps be broken in a wall, and some additional apartments thus be gained, or a temporary room will be built over the balcony. The house of a genuine Russian rarely remains fourteen days without undergoing some change. Caprice or *ennui* will seldom allow him to sleep a fortnight in the same chamber; the dining-room and the nursery will every now and then be made to change places, the drawing-room will be converted into a dormitory, and the school-room into a gaily decorated temple for Terpsichore. The Russians are essentially a nomadic race. The wealthier among them seldom spend a year without wandering to the extremity of their vast empire; and where circumstances deny them this enjoyment, they will find means to indulge their moving propensities, though it be only within the walls of their own houses. The police, also, is responsible for some of the modifications which the houses of St. Petersburg are constantly undergoing; for the police is exceedingly fickle in its tastes and partialities. Sometimes it prohibits this or that form of window; sometimes it orders that all doors shall be of a certain description of wood; sometimes it will allow of trapdoors to cellars; and sometimes it will order them all to be removed at a day's notice.

The pavement of St. Petersburg, owing to the marshy nature of the soil, requires constant repair, and is, therefore, one of the most expensive that can be imagined. It is scarcely possible to obtain for it a firm foundation, whatever amount of rubbish or sand may have previously been laid down. The moisture pierces through every where. I saw a riding-school, the bottom of which had been vaulted like a cellar, and, upon the solid masonry, sand and rubbish had been laid to the depth of two yards, and yet the horses were constantly wading through mud.

It is not to be denied that the Russian pavements are in general very bad. Good-looking enough when just laid down, but calculated rather for show than wear. One kind of pavement, however, is admirable in St. Petersburg; I mean the wooden pavement, over which the carriages roll as smoothly and as noiselessly, as ivory balls over a billiard-table. This kind of pavement, however, which has been adopted only in a few of the principal streets, occasions great expense, on account of the constant repairs which it requires, single blocks sinking every now and then into the watery soil, and leaving dangerous holes behind. The pavement, however, is a matter of less importance here than in most of the European capitals, where nature has not provided a spontaneous railroad for the greater part of the year. For more than six months the streets of St. Petersburg are filled with snow and ice that form a more convenient road for man and horse than any that art has been able to construct. It is curious to observe the various metamorphoses which the snow road undergoes as the seasons advance. In autumn, vast quantities of snow begin to fall, and lie at first in loose and formless masses, through which the Russian steeds dash fearlessly, scattering showers of sparkling flakes around them in their progress. Gradually the snow is beaten down, and then forms a beautiful solid *Bahn*. A gentle thaw tends very much to improve its solidity; whereas, after a long and severe frost, the constant trampling of the horses reduces the surface to a fine powder, that often rises in clouds like dust, to the great annoyance of pedestrians. This, of course, happens only in the Nevskoi Prospekt, the Gorokhovaia Oulitza, and a few others of

the most frequented thoroughfares; in most of the streets, the mass remains compact throughout the winter.

On the return of spring, all this undergoes a remarkable change. In German cities, the police usually takes care to remove the snow; but in St. Petersburg, owing to the great accumulation in its broad streets, this would scarcely be possible. All that the police, therefore, does, when the thaw sets in in good earnest, is to cut trenches through the icy mass to allow the water to run off in proportion as the snow melts. It is not difficult to imagine the filthy state in which the streets necessarily remain under these circumstances. The month of May is in general far advanced, when the pavement still presents nothing to the eye but a lake of mud, with a dirty stream of water rolling through the centre, where the gutter is invariably constructed. The horses are often all but swimming, and a man may sometimes be thankful if he can get from the house-door into his carriage without an accident. This season must be a regular harvest time for the brushmakers. The lackeys and shoeblacks are heard to groan aloud over the condition of their masters' boots and cloaks, and to swear that they never hired themselves for such dirty work. A sudden return of frost often restores the whole mass to a solid substance. The streets are then covered again with ice, on which many an over-driven horse is doomed to break a limb.

A Russian *isvoshtshik* prefers his sledge to every other kind of vehicle, and continues to use it as long as an apology for snow is to be found in the streets. The consequence is, that sledges will often be seen on the shady side, when on the sunny side nothing but a wheeled carriage is able to get along.

The dust in summer is intolerable, as in most Russian towns, and owing to the same reasons: the immense width of the streets, and the vast, open, unpaved squares or places that every where abound, leaving the wind to exercise its power without control. If in some of our closely-built European cities the want of open spaces is felt as an evil, the Russian cities, and St. Petersburg in particular, may be said to have gone into the other extreme. The unnecessary space allowed for their streets makes it almost impossible to light them at night, or to obtain shade in them by day. During summer no lamps are necessary, the streets being then nearly as light at midnight as in London at noon, and the long days that prevail one half of the year are perhaps in part answerable for the imperfect manner in which the streets are lighted during the long winter-nights. The small oil-lamps, then lighted, are large enough to be seen themselves, but not to make other objects visible. They are placed at the sides of the street, whence their rays are scarcely able to reach the centre. They diffuse light only to a distance of about four paces, and when seen from a more remote point look only like little stars. The broad long streets on a clear night look pretty enough with their double rows of little stars, but these serve more for ornament than use. In the Nevskoi Prospekt, indeed, there is no lack of illumination, the shops being for the most part brilliantly lighted up, but in some streets even the glimmering oil-lamps are wanting, and in such a neighbourhood the poor wanderer is grateful for the little light that may escape from some social sitting-room, of which the shutters have been charitably left unclosed.

Notwithstanding this gloomy darkness the streets are not wanting in life, though it is often not without positive danger that a pedestrian can



venture from one side to the other. Sledges are every moment seen to emerge from obscurity and to plunge again as rapidly into impenetrable gloom. Huge shadows seem to be pursuing each other over the snow, the incessant cry of the drivers, "*Padye, padye! beregissa!*" serving them as a mutual warning. The skill and care of these drivers are really deserving of great praise; for accidents, after all, are of rare occurrence. The quiet character of the Russians is shown by the great rarity of murders and acts of violence during these long dark winter-nights. Not that anecdotes are wanting of the rogueries of *isvoshtshiks*, *butshniks*, and *platniks*; but the darkness is so pitchy, that that alone is enough to conjure up all sorts of stories; and I believe that if a city with 500,000 Italians or Spaniards, or even London or Paris, were left for eight long arctic nights enveloped in a St. Petersburgian obscurity, on the ninth day there would be found so many perforated walls, and so many killed and wounded people in the streets, that the town would look as though it had been occupied by a foreign enemy after a battle.

Three ineffectual attempts have been made to light the city with gas. The first was during Alexander's reign; when, just as all the arrangements were complete, the buildings caught fire, and the plan was abandoned for some years. The second attempt was made after the accession of the present emperor. The high and ungainly building intended for the gasometer was injudiciously placed near the Winter Palace, and formed so prominent a deformity, that the emperor was glad in 1838 to buy up the whole of the premises belonging to the company, for the purpose of having them pulled down. The company then went to work again, and in the autumn of 1839, when people were beginning to look forward to a light winter, the whole illumination was opened and closed on the same day by a frightful explosion, by which the gasometer was destroyed, a number of people killed, and the money of the shareholders lost. Since then the attempt has not been renewed.

The huge placards and the colossal letters by which the tradesmen of London and Paris seek to attract public attention, are unknown in St. Petersburg. The reading public there is extremely limited, and the merchant who wishes to recommend himself to the multitude must have recourse to a less lettered process. This accounts for the abundance of pictorial illustrations that decorate so many of the shopfronts, or advertise the passenger that such and such an artist may be found within. The optician announces his calling by a profuse display of spectacles and telescopes; the butcher suspends in front of his establishment a couple of painted oxen, or perhaps a portrait of himself, in the act of presenting a ruddy joint to a passing dame. These signs, that speak the only mute language intelligible to a Russian multitude, relieve in some measure the monotony of the streets. The baker is sure to have a board over his door with a representation of every species of roll and loaf offered for sale in his shop; the tallowchandler is equally careful to suspend the portraits of all his varieties of longs and shorts destined for the enlightenment of mankind. The musician, the pastrycook, and in short every handicraftsman to whom the humbler classes are likely to apply, have adopted the same plan, and from the second and third floors huge pictures may sometimes be seen suspended, with appalling likenesses of fiddles, flutes, tarts, sugarplums, sausages, smoked hams, coats, caps, shoes, stockings, &c.

For a barber the customary symbol is the following picture: A lady sits fainting in a chair. Before her stands the man of science with a glittering lancet in his hand, and from her snow white arm a purple fountain springs into the air, to fall afterwards into a basin held by an attendant youth. By the side of the lady sits a phlegmatic philosopher undergoing the operation of shaving, without manifesting the slightest sympathy for the fair sufferer. Around the whole is a kind of arabesque border composed of black leeches and instruments for drawing teeth. This picture is of frequent occurrence in every large Russian town. The most characteristic of these signs appeared to me that of a midwife. A bed with the curtains closely drawn announced the invisible presence of the *accouchée*, and in front was a newly-arrived stranger on the lap of the *accoucheuse*, and undergoing, to his manifest discomfiture, the infliction of his first toilet. Most of these pictures are very tolerably executed, and that of a Parisian milliner is particularly entitled to commendation for the art expended on the gauze caps, and the lace trimmings. Nor must it be supposed that the merchant is content with displaying only one or two of the articles in which he deals; no, the whole shop must figure on the board, and not only the dealer, but his customers also must be portrayed there. The coffeehouse-keeper does not think he has done enough when he has displayed a steaming kettle and a graceful array of cups; he must have a whole party making themselves comfortable over their coffee and cigars, and crying to the wavering passenger, "Go thou, and do likewise." The jeweller must have not only rings and stars and crosses, but he must have generals and excellencies as large as life, with their breasts blazing with orders, and at least five fingers on each hand laden with rings. The Russians attach great importance to these signs, and a stranger may obtain from them some knowledge of the manners of the people.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE NEVA.

THE river Neva serves to carry off the surplus waters of the Ladoga Lake. In this large reservoir, which covers a space of about 100 German (2000 English) square miles, the water has had full leisure to deposit all its impurities, and has not had time to collect any fresh ones, during the few leagues that intervene between the lake and the city. The water of the Neva, therefore, at St. Petersburg is as clear as crystal, and reminds the traveller of the appearance of the Rhine when it first issues from among the icy grottoes of the Alpine glaciers. About a league from its mouth, the Neva divides into several arms, forming thus a little archipelago of islands, which are either included within the city of St. Petersburg, or contribute to its embellishment by their gardens and plantations. These arms of the Neva, at least the four principal among them, are known by the names of the Great and Little Neva, and the

Great and Little Nefka; and though there are few rivers that may not be said to benefit the cities built upon their banks, yet it may safely be said, that there is no city more indebted to its river than the Palmyra of the North. From the interior of the empire the Neva brings to her capital the native abundance of the land; food for man, and for the animals dependent on man, materials for clothing, housing, and warming him. At her mouth she receives the luxuries of foreign regions, and conveys them not only to the noble palaces on her own banks, but, by means of an extensive system of inland navigation, she transports them into the most central provinces of the vast Russian empire. She furnishes the first necessary of life, in the highest perfection, to the citizens of St. Petersburg, who are without any other supply of water, for a pure spring is not to be met with for many leagues around. She makes their soup, and prepares the very best of tea and coffee for them. She yields an abundance of fish for their banquets, and does not disdain to render them even the most menial services; she washes their bodies and their linen, and winding through their city in a multitude of canals, carries away all its impurities. The water of the Neva is as daily a topic with those that dwell on its banks, as the water of the Nile is to the Egyptians; and this is the less surprising, as the Neva is a source, not only of delight and enjoyment to the people of St. Petersburg, but also one of constant anxiety, and sometimes of terror.

The northern winter imprisons the lovely nymph of the Neva in icy bands for six months in the year. It is seldom till after the beginning of April that the water acquires sufficient warmth to burst her prison. The moment is always anxiously expected, and no sooner have the dirty masses of ice advanced sufficiently to display as much of the bright mirror of the river as may suffice to bear a boat from one side to the other, than the glad tidings are announced to the inhabitants by the artillery of the fortress. At that moment, be it day or night, the commandant of the fortress, arrayed in all the insignia of his rank, and accompanied by the officers of his suite, embarks in an elegant gondola, and repairs to the emperor's palace which lies immediately opposite. He fills a large crystal goblet with the water of the Neva, and presents it to the emperor as the first and most precious tribute of returning spring. He informs his master that the force of winter has been broken, that the waters are free again, that an active navigation may now again be looked for, and points to his own gondola, as the first swan that has swum on the river that year. He then presents the goblet to the emperor, who drinks it off to the health of the dear citizens of his capital. There is not probably on the face of the globe, another glass of water that brings a better price, for it is customary for the emperor to fill the goblet with ducats before he returns it to the commandant. Such at least *was* the custom; but the goblet was found to have a sad tendency to enlarge its dimensions, so that the emperor began to perceive that he had every year a larger dose of water to drink, and a greater number of ducats to pay for it. At last he thought it high time to compromise matters with his commandant, who now receives on each occasion a fixed sum of 200 ducats. Even this, it must be admitted, is a truly imperial fee for a draught of water, but the compromise is said to have effectually arrested the alarming growth of the goblet.

As the close of winter approaches, the ice of the Neva assumes a very



remarkable appearance resolving itself into a multitude of thin bars of ice, of about an inch in diameter, and equal in length to the thickness of the crust that covers the river. These bars have at last so little adhesion, that it becomes dangerous to venture on the ice, except where it is covered by a solid mass of snow. The foot, pushing down some of these bars, will sink at times through ice several ells thick, and the large masses of ice apparently quite solid, that lie on the dry ground, break into a multitude of glassy bars when gently touched with a stick. Several weeks, therefore, before the ice breaks up, all driving or walking upon it is prohibited. Here and there some open spaces begin to show themselves, and a quantity of dirty snow-water collects upon the surface. The icy crust, that, a few weeks previously, had looked so gay and animated with its sledges and promenaders, becomes now quite oppressive to look upon, and every one longs to see the dirty, useless, worn-out servitor take his departure. There has often been fine warm weather for several weeks before the Neva shows the least sign of recovering her liberty, for which, in the end, she is usually more indebted to rain and wind than to the rays of the sun. One good shower, at this season, has more effect upon the ice than three days of sunshine; and it is rarely till after there have been several rainy and windy days in succession, that the ice is got into motion. The surest symptom of an approaching break-up is the disappearance of the water from the surface. As long as there is water on the ice, nobody hesitates to venture on it, even when the horses have to wade breast high; but as soon as the water disappears, the fact is taken as a warning that the ice has separated from the banks, and has become too porous to retain water on its surface.

It is generally between the 6th and the 14th of April (old style), or between the 18th and the 26th, according to the calendar in use in most parts of Europe, that the Neva throws off her icy covering. The 6th is the most general day. On that day the interesting fact is said to occur, on an average, ten times in a century, so that ten to one against the 6th is always thought a fair wager. The 30th of April (12th of May, N. S.) is considered the latest day, and the 6th of March (18th N. S.) is considered the earliest day on which the ice ever breaks up. On each of these days the occurrence is supposed to take place once in a hundred years.—It is generally about the middle of November, and more frequently on the 20th (2d of Dec. N. S.) than on any other day, that the ice is brought to a stand still. In 1826 the river was not frozen up before the 14th of December, and in 1805 as early as the 16th of October.

The breaking up of the ice is an anxious moment to every one. A multitude of wagers are always depending upon it, and every one is more or less interested. The carpenters and workpeople long to earn an honest penny or two by the reconstruction of the bridges; the ladies wish the Neva and the Gulf of Finland clear, that the steamer from Lübeck may arrive with the latest *nouveautés* from Paris; the merchants are often in the most painful suspense, lest a protracted winter, by delaying the arrival of their vessels, should mar the finest speculations; booksellers and students are longing for a supply of the new books that have been ushered into life in England, France, and Germany, during the preceding six months. The sick native, and the home-sick stranger, are alike anxious for the day that may re-establish the communication with more genial climes, and almost the only subject of speculation at this season, is the day when the river

will be free again. On Easter Sunday and Easter Monday a great number of bets are sure to be laid out. One man, in 1836, had betted against every day, from the 1st to the 17th of April, and won nearly all his wagers.

The departure of the ice always forms an exciting spectacle, and crowds are sure to be attracted to the quays by the first gun fired from the citadel. The golden gondola of the commandant is not long alone in its glory, for hundreds of boats are quickly in motion, to re-establish the communication between the different quarters of the city.

The first blow is more than half the battle on these occasions, but it is not all the battle. It is only that part of the ice which lies in the immediate vicinity of St. Petersburg that moves away on the first day. The ice from the upper part of the river frequently comes down afterwards in huge masses, and more than once forces the inhabitants of the one side to postpone their visits to their friends of the other side. For several weeks after the first break up, the ice continues occasionally to come down in great force from the Ladoga lake. As this lake has a surface of 2000 square miles, if all the ice had to go down the Neva, which is only a verst in breadth and not very rapid in its current, it would take more than two months of incessant *Eisgang*. It follows, therefore, that the greater part of the ice must melt within the lake itself; still quite enough remains for the annoyance of the St. Petersburgers, who are often inconvenienced by the accumulation that takes place at the mouth of the river. The boatmen of St. Petersburg, however, are tolerably familiar with ice, and the navigation on the river is seldom interrupted by these later arrivals from the lake.

All the other harbours of the Baltic are usually free from ice before that of St. Petersburg, and a number of vessels are almost always awaiting, in the Sound, the news that the navigation of the Russian capital has been resumed. The first spring ship that arrives in the Neva is the occasion of great rejoicing, and seldom fails to bring its cargo to an excellent market. It is mostly laden with oranges, millinery, and such articles of taste and vanity as are likely to be most attractive to the frivolous and wealthy, who seldom fail to reward the first comer by purchasing his wares at enormous prices. The first ship is soon followed by multitudes, and the most active life succeeds to a stillness like that of death. All the flags of Europe come floating in from the sea, and fragile rafts and rudely-built barges descend the river with the products of the interior. The contents of the warehouses find their way on ship-board. The ships of war take their departure for their peaceful evolutions in the Baltic. The smoking steamers are seen snorting and splashing up and down the river, where a few weeks before a seal could not have found room to air himself. Every day, every hour, brings something new, till the disenchantment of the icy palace is complete.

An immense quantity of ice is consumed in Russian housekeeping. Throughout the summer, ices are sold in the streets of every Russian town, and not only iced water, iced wine, and iced beer, but even iced tea is drunk in immense quantities. The short but excessively hot summer would spoil most of the food brought to market, had not the winter provided in abundance the means for guarding against such rapid decomposition. An icehouse is therefore looked on as an indispensable appendage not merely to the establishments of the wealthy, but even to the huts of



the peasants. In St. Petersburg alone there are said to be ten thousand ice-houses, and it may easily be supposed that to fill all these cellars is a task of no trifling magnitude. It is not too much to calculate that each ice-house, on an average, requires fifty sledge loads of ice to fill it. The fishmongers, butchers, and dealers in quass have such enormous cellars, that many hundreds of loads will go into them, and the breweries, distilleries, &c., consume incalculable quantities. According to the above calculation, 500,000 sledge loads of ice would have to be drawn out of the Neva every year, but this calculation is under rather than over the mark. It is certainly the merchandize in which the most extensive traffic is carried on during winter. Whole processions of sledges laden with the glittering crystals may then be seen ascending from the Neva, and thousands of men are incessantly at work raising the cooling produce from its parent river.

The breaking of the ice is carried on in this way. The workmen begin by clearing the snow away from the surface, that they may clearly trace out the form of the blocks to be detached. They then measure off a large parallelogram, and mark the outline with a hatchet. This parallelogram is subdivided into a number of squares of a size to suit the capacity of their sledges. When the drawing is complete, the more serious part of the work begins. A regular trench has to be formed round the parallelogram in question. This is done with hatchets, and as the ice is frequently four or five feet thick, the trenches become at last so deep that the workmen are as completely lost to the eye as if they had been labouring in a mine. Of course, a sufficient thickness of ice must be left in the trenches to bear the workmen, which is afterwards broken with bars of iron. When the parallelogram has thus been loosened, the subdivision is effected with comparative ease. A number of men mount the swimming mass, and with their pointed iron ice-breakers, they all strike at the same moment upon the line that has been marked out. A few volleys of this kind make the ice break just along the wished for line, and each of the oblong slips thus obtained, is broken up again into square pieces after a similar fashion. To draw the fragments out of the water, a kind of inclined railroad has to be made on the side of the standing ice. This done, iron hooks are fastened into the pieces that are to be landed, and, amid loud cheers, the clear, green, crystalline mass is drawn up by willing hands. As the huge lumps lie on the snow, they appear of an emerald green, and are remarkably compact, without either bubble or rent. As soon as the sledge is loaded, the driver seats himself upon his merchandize, and thus, coolly enthroned, glides away to the cellars of his customers, enlivening his frosty occupation with a merry song. It is by no means without interest to visit the ice-shafts of the Neva, and watch the Russian labourers while engaged in a task so congenial to the habits of their country.

In the cellars the ice is piled up with much art and regularity, and all sorts of shelves and niches are made, for the convenience of placing milk, meat, and similar articles there in hot weather. Such a description at least applies to what may be called a tidy orderly ice-house; but tidiness and order do not always preside over Russian arrangements, and in the majority of cellars the ice is thrown carelessly in and broken into pieces, that it may be packed away into the corners, and that as little space as possible may be left unoccupied. The consistency and durability of the

ice do not appear to suffer from this breaking process; on the contrary, the whole, if well packed, soon freezes into one compact mass, that is afterwards proof against the warmest summer. The Russians are so accustomed to these ice-houses, that they are at a loss to understand how a family can do without them, and their housewives are in the greatest trouble when they think they have not laid in a sufficient supply of ice during the winter, or when in summer they fancy their stock likely to run short. It may safely be estimated that the ice consumed in St. Petersburg during the summer, costs the inhabitants from two to three millions of rubles.

Permanent bridges have been built in St. Petersburg only over the canals, the Fontanka, the Moika, the Ligofka, &c., which are called canals, and have been worked into the shape of canals, but which, in reality, are small arms of the Neva. Most of these bridges were built by the Empress Catherine. They are of stone, very solid, are all constructed after the same model, and are, absurdly enough, provided with gates and doors, for the apparent purpose of impeding the progress of pedestrians. There are upwards of thirty of them, but they are much too narrow for the increased traffic of the city, and the tide of equipages rolling through the streets generally finds itself reduced to a more moderate pace on arriving near a bridge. Policemen are therefore stationed at every bridge, to maintain order and prevent accidents; and whereas in Germany a man is liable to a fine of two or three dollars for driving too fast over a bridge, a coachman in St. Petersburg exposes not only himself but his horses too to be assailed by the cane of the policeman if he neglects to drive over a bridge otherwise than at a quick trot. Some new bridges, and among them several elegant suspension bridges, have been added of late years, and of these there may also be about thirty, still the number is felt to be too small for this city of many islands.

Over the larger arms of the river, the communication by means of bridges is in a most unsatisfactory condition. The two most important portions of the city, for instance, the Vassili Ostrof and the Great Side, are connected only by one bridge, the Isaac's Bridge; the Trotskoi Most is the only bridge between the Great Side and the St. Petersburg Side; the Vassili Ostrof again has one bridge to the St. Petersburg Side; and the Vilborg Side is connected by one bridge with the St. Petersburg Side, and by another with the Great Side. These five bridges, with four smaller ones that serve to connect the Apothecary Island, the Stone Island, Yelagin Island, and Krestofski Island, consist merely of boarded carriageways resting on pontoons. The masses of ice that come down in spring from the Ladoga Lake have hitherto deterred the government from incurring the expense of building permanent bridges of stone, though scarcely a year elapses in which some plan for the construction of better bridges is not proposed, discussed, forgotten, and renewed.

It sometimes happens that the ice in the gulf of Cronstadt is broken by stormy weather, while that in the Neva continues solid for some time afterwards. The immense pressure that then ensues causes the whole mass of ice in the river to glide downward in an unbroken body towards the gulf. This pressure is supposed to be so great that no bridge would be able to withstand it. Another difficulty is the marshy character of the soil, in which it would not be easy, except at enormous cost, to obtain a

foundation sufficiently strong to bear the buttresses of a bridge. These are serious difficulties, no doubt, but I am satisfied they will some day or other be overcome.

The nine pontoon bridges of St. Petersburg are so constructed that they may easily be taken to pieces, and quickly be put together again. During summer they remain undisturbed, each pontoon moored to its anchor, and fastened to huge piles; but when the ice begins to come down the river in autumn, the bridges are taken asunder. Each bridge has its commandant with a hundred or two of workmen under his command. When the bridge has thus been removed, the intercourse between the different portions of the city can be carried on only by means of boats. As soon as the ice stands the bridges are reconstructed, for the ice on the Neva always forms a very rough surface, for which reason most people prefer using the bridges when they wish to cross the river. Not but a number of paths, crossing each other in all directions, are soon formed in the vast snowy desert.

In spring, the bridges continue to be used till the artillery of the fortress announces the breaking up of the ice, when they rapidly disappear under the dexterous management of the commandants and their experienced assistants. Preparations have usually been made some days before, by clearing a space in the river, to allow the pontoons to glide safely down into their several havens of refuge. As soon as the ice has passed, the bridges are restored, but every succeeding arrival of ice makes another demolition necessary. Such is the eagerness of the inhabitants of the different quarters to be able to avail themselves of the accommodation of their bridges, that they take advantage even of the shortest interval of open water. Each time that the Isaac's bridge is put together, an expense of several hundred rubles is incurred; nevertheless, I have seen it taken to pieces and put together again two or three times on one day, and in the course of one spring it is said to have been broken up and reconstructed no less than twenty-three times.

On these occasions, the boldness and dexterity of the workmen, the activity of the commandant, the formidable masses of ice, the bridges themselves floating down the stream, and a multitude of little occurrences that take place, combine to form an interesting and animated spectacle. Sometimes, of course, accidents happen. Thus in the spring of 1836, the Isaac's Bridge, the most important of all, got aground and could not be brought afloat again. A violent gale from the east, it was said, had blown so much of the water out into the gulf, that the river had lost its requisite depth. Others were charitable enough to say that the commandant had accepted a bribe from the contractors who farm the boats on the river. Be this as it may, the bridge continued aground for eight days, the boats made a splendid harvest, and the commandant was threatened with arrest and a court of inquiry. At last the master of police interfered. Three hundred men were sent up to their necks into the water, to pull away at the pontoons, while others worked away behind with levers and iron bars. Screaming, creaking, bending, and breaking, the bridge was at last lifted by main force, as it were, out of the marsh, and floated majestically back to its accustomed station.

It may easily be supposed that St. Petersburg has to pay dearly enough for these wretched wooden bridges. The constant demolition and reconstruction soon wear the wood out, and the boards at the top are quickly



worn to dust by the carriages incessantly passing across. It is not at all impossible that the Isaac's Bridge, during the short period of its existence, has cost more than the massive bridge of Dresden during the three hundred years that have elapsed since it was built.\*

When in its bridgeless condition, the city feels itself at all times very uncomfortable. St. Petersburg may then be said to be divided into as many towns as there are islands; relations can learn as little from each other for days together, as if an ocean divided them instead of a river; the public officers can receive no orders from the central administration, and must act on their own judgment and responsibility; merchants cannot confer together, bills cannot be presented, teachers cannot give their lessons, guests cannot join the festive board, and the *isvoshtshiks* can circulate only within a limited range. Business and pleasure are alike interrupted, and every one longs to be delivered from what is felt as a species of imprisonment. The consequence is, that in autumn, when the icy covering is yet in the weakness of its infancy, and in spring, when it begins to fall into the decrepitude of age, a number of contrivances are had recourse to, in order to strengthen it. The very moment the ice stands, straw roads are laid in every direction over the still disjointed fragments; and in spring, boards are laid over the dangerous places, as long as the police will allow these supplementary bridges to be used. When the authorities consider the time is come to prohibit all passage across the ice, policemen are stationed every where along the sides of the river, to enforce the prohibition. The messages to be carried across are, however, sometimes of such importance, and the rewards offered so great, that the Russian *mushiks* often venture across, in defiance of the police, even when the ice is on the move. The adventurous messenger, on such occasions, armed only with a deal board, may be seen dexterously crossing from one piece of ice to another, to the great amusement of the spectators on the quays, and generally he escapes, not only the dangers of the passage, but also the more dreaded dangers to be apprehended from the gendarmes waiting for him on the shore. Sometimes, of course, these hazardous attempts are attended by fatal consequences, and every year the Neva is sure to swallow up her allotted number of victims; indeed, it may be doubted whether there is another city in the world, where so many people are yearly drowned, as at St. Petersburg.

It is melancholy to think of the fate probably reserved for this beautiful youthful city, with all its splendid creations. There are cities in the world of which a large portion might be destroyed to their manifest advantage; but in the new and cheerful St. Petersburg, every act of destruction, whether by the hand of nature or of man, seems calculated to awaken sorrow and regret. Yet such are the destructive powers by which its existence is threatened, that no other city probably lives in such constant and imminent peril.

\* The Dresden Bridge, known to the inhabitants under the name of the Elbe Bridge, is 1420 feet long, or 200 feet longer than Waterloo Bridge. The Elbe Bridge is considered the finest and longest structure of the kind in Germany. It rests on sixteen arches, is thirty-six feet in width, and has a foot pavement and an iron balustrade on each side. On the centre pier stands a bronze crucifix, with an inscription in commemoration of the partial destruction of the bridge in 1813, to facilitate the retreat of the French under Marshal Davoust, and of its restoration by the Emperor Alexander.

The Gulf of Finland runs from St. Petersburg in a due westerly direction, and it is exactly from that quarter that the heaviest storms always blow. The west wind naturally sweeps the waters up towards the city. If the gulf were broad at its termination, this would perhaps be of little consequence; but, unfortunately, the gulf narrows gradually to a point, and that point is St. Petersburg. When a gale, therefore, blows from the west, the waters of the gulf are blown into the Neva, and oppose the exit of those that come rolling down from the lake. Now the Delta of the Neva, into which the palaces of St. Petersburg have struck their roots, is flat and low, and there is scarcely a spot of ground in the capital that lies more than twelve or fourteen feet above the customary level of the sea. A rise of fifteen feet is, therefore, enough to put the whole city under water, and a rise of thirty or forty feet would be enough to drown nearly the whole population. The poor inhabitants are thus in constant danger, and can seldom be certain that within the next twenty-four hours, the whole 500,000 of them will not be swept at once into a watery grave.

All that is necessary to bring about such a calamity is that a storm from the west should arise just as the ice is breaking up, and that this should happen when the water in the river is at its highest. The masses of ice blown from the sea into the river would then meet those that would be coming down, and the struggle between these opposing powers would suffice to raze to the ground the whole city and all its proud palaces, and princes and beggars would be drowned promiscuously, like Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. The matter is so serious, that I don't feel certain whether I ought to allow myself to speak so sportively about it. The people of St. Petersburg are quite aware of their danger, and many among them, when they reflect on it, feel their hearts heaving within them. Their only hope is that the three events, a westerly storm, high water, and *Eisgang*, are not likely to occur simultaneously. There are sixty-four points of the compass, they say, and when it is high water, and the ice coming down, it is not very probable that an obstinate west wind should choose just that moment to blow in upon us to our destruction.

It is not the less true, however, that, during the spring, it does often blow from the west for many days together, when the swimming ice is still formidable enough to excite serious alarm. It is to be regretted that the Fins, the ancient inhabitants of the Delta of the Neva, should not have kept meteorological registers, from which we might calculate how often in a thousand years, or perhaps in ten thousand years, the dreaded junction of these three circumstances has usually occurred. As it is, we must not be surprised, if we read one of these days in the newspapers, that St. Petersburg, which rose so suddenly, like a brilliant meteor from the Finnish marshes, has sunk as suddenly, and been extinguished there like an *ignis fatuus*. May God have the city in his keeping.

Human aid can be of no avail. Little as Russian enterprise is disposed to be deterred by difficulties, it will scarcely undertake to dam off the ocean, or to give to a mighty river a new course. Canals to carry away the waters of the Neva, and moles to serve as ramparts against the sea, have sometimes been spoken of, but practical men have always rejected the proposed plans as impossible of execution. Nothing, therefore, has, as yet, been done, and St. Petersburg continues exposed to the mercy of the winds and waves. In many quarters of the town, inundations are of



frequent occurrence, and come so suddenly, that the assembled guests at a party are not unfrequently unable to leave the hospitable roof under which they have been entertained. Water is quite as much dreaded in St. Petersburg as fire is in other cities, and measures are, therefore, taken to inform the inhabitants of their danger the moment the river begins to rise above its customary level. When the extreme points of the islands are under water, a cannon is fired from the Admiralty, and the water-flags are hoisted on every steeple, as a signal that the Nereids have declared the city in a state of siege. This alarm-gun is repeated every hour, until the danger seems to be at an end. When the river rises sufficiently high to lay the lowest streets under water, the alarm-gun is fired every quarter of an hour. In proportion as the river rises, the artillery becomes louder and more importunate, till at last minute-guns are fired, and are understood as a cry of despair, calling upon ships and boats to hasten to the aid of a drowning population.

The misery that follows upon a general inundation is indescribable. Every one still talks of the sufferings and calamities brought upon the city by the disastrous 17th of November, 1824. On that day, there occurred the highest inundation of which a record has been preserved, and in every street the height to which the river rose is still marked. The water rose quite quietly, as is usually the case with the inundations of St. Petersburg, where there are no dykes to break through. Impelled by a furious west wind, the water continued to rise higher and higher, came streaming through the streets, lifted all the carts and equipages from the ground, rushed in mighty cataracts through the windows and into the cellars, and rose in huge columns from the common sewers. On Vasiliefskoi Island and on the St. Petersburg side the suffering was greatest, particularly on the latter island, where many of the poor were lodged in tenements of no very solid construction. Some of the wooden houses were lifted from the ground and continued to swim about with all their inhabitants in them, and without going to pieces. Equipages were abandoned in the streets, and the horses, unable to disengage themselves from their harness, were miserably drowned, while their masters had sought safety in some more elevated spot. The trees in the public squares were as crowded with men as they had ever before been with sparrows. Still the water kept rising, and towards evening had attained such a height, that it was feared the storm would tear the men of war from their moorings and drive them in among the houses. The calamity was the more destructive as it had come so noiselessly upon the city, that none had imagined the danger so great as it really was. The worst effects were those that were operated unseen. Many houses fell in only on the following day, when the river had already returned into its accustomed bed; but from those that remained standing, it was long before the damp could be expelled. Sickness became general, and deadly epidemics continued to rage in some quarters for many weeks afterwards.

The night was terrible. The waters had continued to rise till the evening, and should they continue to do so, there seemed to be no chance of escape during the pitchy darkness that might be looked for. Thousands of families, the members of which were separated, spent the night in torturing anxiety.

Even the most serious things have often a ludicrous side on which they may be viewed, and along with the gloomy recollections of that calamitous

day, a variety of amusing anecdotes have also been preserved. A gardener told me that he had been busy clipping some trees, and had not noticed the rising of the water, till it was too late for him to attempt to seek refuge any where but on the roof of an adjoining garden pavilion, where he was soon joined by such a host of rats and mice, that he became apprehensive of being devoured by them. Fortunately, however, a dog and a cat sought refuge in the same place. With these he immediately entered into an offensive and defensive alliance, and the three confederates were able to make good their position during the night.

A merchant of my acquaintance was looking out of his window on the second floor, when there came floating by a fragment of a bridge, with three human beings clinging to it. They stretched out their hands to him for help. He threw out a rope, and, with the assistance of his servant, succeeded in rescuing them all three from their perilous position. The first whom they landed was a poor Jew who trembled like an aspen-tree, the second was a bearded believer in the orthodox Russian Greek church, the third a bareheaded Mahometan Tartar. My protestant Mend equipped them all three in his Parisian coats and in linen of the latest London fashion, for which they were all well pleased to exchange the drenched costumes of their several nations; and after this unexpected metamorphosis, the host entertained his grateful guests with a truly Christian and refreshing supper.

Many believe that what with merchandise spoiled, houses destroyed, furniture injured, damage to the pavement, &c., this inundation cost the city more than a hundred million of rubles, and that directly and indirectly several thousands of the inhabitants lost their lives on the occasion. In every street the highest point attained by the water is marked by a line on the sides of the houses. God grant that the house-painters may never again be employed in so melancholy an office. Every inch that they might have had to place their marks higher, would have cost the city several millions more, and would have plunged at least a hundred more families into mourning.

The purity of the Neva water has already been mentioned, yet it is a well-known fact, that when drunk by strangers it produces at first unpleasant effects, for which reason persons, when they first arrive at St. Petersburg, are always advised to drink no water without mixing wine or spirit with it. This lasts, however, for a very short time; and once accustomed to the Neva water, most people grow so fond of it, that they prefer it to every other water in the world. A St. Petersburger, on returning from a journey, always congratulates himself on being again able to slake his thirst in the water of his beloved river, and many a Russian, no doubt, has been welcomed home again in the same way in which I once saw a young man welcomed on his return to his family,—namely, with a goblet of Neva water. The Emperor Alexander, it is said, when he travelled, always had a quantity of Neva water bottled up for his own drinking during his absence from his capital. The tea and coffee in St. Petersburg are excellent, and their good qualities are in part attributed to the water with which they are prepared. In the shape of beer it is drunk in every corner of the empire, and the English residents are unanimous in their testimony to the superiority of Neva water for washing linen.

The Neva water is, however, the only usable water within reach of St. Petersburg. All the wells that have been sunk in and near the city

yield nothing but a yellow disagreeable water, unfit for any domestic purposes. In none of the houses is the water laid on by means of pipes, but in each house there is a large water-butt, and the men, whose exclusive business it is to fill these reservoirs, are busily engaged all day long with their water-carts, drawn generally each by one horse. The poorer classes fetch their water from the river-side in pails. These are fastened to long poles, that the water may be drawn as far as possible from the bank, for in the middle of the stream the water is of course purer than near the side. In the winter, holes are hewn in the ice, whence the water is pumped up, and troughs are constructed of ice in the streets for the use of the horses. In spring, when the snow melts, the river, for a time, loses its accustomed purity, and the want of clean water becomes a subject of general lamentation. The water-carts plying in every direction, form one of the constant decorations of the St. Petersburg streets. Perhaps one of the most useful innovations that a Russian emperor could introduce into the interior organization of his capital, would be a good water-company, that would lay down pipes throughout the city, and introduce a constant supply of so necessary an article into the interior of every dwelling.

The washing of linen is an occupation usually carried on with us in the interior of our houses. Throughout Russia it is seldom that the laundress plies her work any where but in the river itself. On all the canals and along the banks of the river, are seen floating washhouses, where the linen is undergoing the operation of being immersed in water, and then soundly beaten with a kind of flat wooden mallet. This primitive system of washing prevails throughout all the countries peopled by the Slavonian races, from St. Petersburg to Macedonia. Even during the severest winter, when it costs some trouble to keep their ice-holes open, the hardy women engaged in these chilly labours may be seen busily at work, and though almost incrustated in ice, they are never heard to complain of the severity of the cold. There are some indeed of the luxurious St. Petersburgers, who do not content themselves with so rude a process. I have been told of some who carry their delicacy on this point so far, that they declare it is impossible to have a shirt properly washed in Russia, and therefore send their dirty linen every fortnight by the steamer to London, whence they receive it back, in due course, washed and bleached to their satisfaction.

The *Sadoks*, or floating fish-magazines, of the Neva, are an object of even more interest to a stranger than the washing-boats. The Russians are admirably skilled in all that relates to the catching, preserving, and selling of fish. The *sadoks* are pretty wooden houses, neatly painted, and not unlike the pavilions on the Alster at Hamburg. The *sadok* is fixed on a kind of raft, is moored close to the bank, with which it generally communicates by means of a small wooden bridge. Within is generally a large room, where the dried and smoked fish are hung up, like the hams and sausages in the cottage of a Westphalian peasant. In the middle, by way of a protection to the establishment, there are sure to be a couple of large sacred images with lamps burning before them. Besides smoking and salting their fish, the Russians have another mode of preserving them,—namely, by freezing them. In winter large boxes may be seen, something like our German meal-chests. These boxes are filled with frozen fish: with turbot and herrings from Archangel, and with the delicate *yershtshis* from the Ladoga lake. At each side of the larger room, are some smaller



ones, for the accommodation of the crew of the sadok, and one fitted up as a kind of refreshment-room for those who visit these establishments for the purpose of eating fresh caviare in perfection. Behind the sadok are always large reservoirs in which a number of live fish are kept, for the Russians are great gourmands in the article of fish, and make a great point of popping them alive into the pot. This species of lux is sometimes carried to a great excess. The fish of the Volga are brought alive to St. Petersburg at an enormous cost. A sterlet, which, if dead, might be had for thirty or forty rubles, will bring from 100 to 300 if alive, a wealthy Russian taking a pride in showing it alive to his guests, a little while before it figures on his board.

In the centre of the town, the Neva is about a verst in breadth, and, owing to the great bend which the river makes, its length within the city is not less than three German (more than thirteen English) miles. It is easy to imagine the icy waste which the surface must present in winter, when, in the centre of this great capital, a man may perform journeys by night that almost make him fancy himself travelling in the wilds of Lapland. The lamps in the houses may indeed be seen twinkling at a distance, but the moon or the aurora borealis afford the only light to guide him on his way, and he will often have occasion to consult the compass and the stars, to direct his course. People have at times been robbed and murdered on the ice, so that these night expeditions on the Neva during winter are always in very bad odour, and avoided as much as possible by all prudent people. How changed is the scene in summer, when boating on the Neva becomes a favourite amusement with all classes! The nights then are warm and beautifully clear, and the Russians probably enjoy their gondolas the more, on account of the shortness of the period during which they *can* enjoy them. During June and July, the arms of the Neva are swarming, night and day, with gondolas and sailing-boats, and all the boasted scenes of Venice and her canals are insignificant to the animated pictures then constantly presenting themselves on this northern river. Imagine an atmosphere gently agitated by the mildest and most insinuating zephyrs; the air warm but not sultry, and the night so clear that all creation seems awake, and even the birds continue to pour forth their song; a night, in short, with all the charms and loveliness of night, combined with all the convenience of day, as though the jocund day had flung over his shoulders the majestic mantle of night. Imagine then a noble river, meandering in a multitude of arms, through an archipelago of islands, crowned with magnificent palaces, or decorated with delicious gardens. The wide sea itself, close to the city, presents itself at each of the six mouths of the river. Imagine the scene animated by thousands of ships and boats. Here the sailing-boat of the English skipper, who proudly displays his superior skill over all else that floats on the watery element; there the German burgher with his family, abandoning himself to enjoyment after the labours of a busy day. On another side may be seen a congregation of Russian peasants pouring the sweet melodies of their nation over the bosom of the water, or the splendid barge of a Russian noble, attended by a magnificent band of wind instruments, each artist the born thrall of the master he attends on. The seamen of every maritime nation may be seen rowing about, enjoying a scene to the animation of which they contribute their share. I doubt whether there be a city on the globe that can show any thing equal to the beauty of one of these boat-excursions on the Neva, during a fine summer-night.



## CHAPTER IV.

## LIFE IN THE STREETS.

A STRANGER accustomed to the crowds and bustle of London or Paris, is struck on his arrival at St. Petersburg by the emptiness of the streets. He finds vast open spaces in which at times he beholds nothing but a solitary droshky, that wends its way along like a boat drifting on the open sea. He sees spacious streets bordered by rows of mute palaces with only here and there a human figure hovering about, like a lurking freebooter among a waste of rocks. The vastness of the plan on which the city has been laid out, shows that its founders speculated on a distant future. Rapidly as the population has been increasing, it is still insufficient to fill the frame allotted to it, or to give to the streets that life and movement which we look for in the capital of a great empire. On the occasion, indeed, of great public festivals and rejoicings, and at all times in the Nevskoi Prospekt and about the Admiralty, the movement is very considerable, but this only tends to leave the throng and bustle of the other quarters of the town far below the average.

The population of St. Petersburg is the most varied and motley that mind can imagine. To begin with the military. We have the Caucasian guards, the Tartar guards, the Finland guards, besides a fourth and fifth division of the guards for the various tribes of Cossacks. Of these nations, the *élite* are thus always retained as hostages in the capital, and their several uniforms are alone sufficient to present a never-changing picture to the eye of an observer. Here may be seen a Cossack trotting over one of the *Platz Parads* with his lance in rest, as though in his imagination he were still pursuing a cloud of flying Frenchmen. Further on, perchance a Circassian cavalier, in his shirt of mail, and harnessed from head to foot, is going through his warlike exercises. The Moslem from the Taurus may be seen gravely moving through the throng, while the well-drilled Russian soldiers defile in long columns through the streets. Of all the endless variety of uniforms that belong to the great Russian army, a few specimens are always to be seen in the capital. There are the Pavlov guards, the Semeonov guards, and the Pavlogradski guards; the Sum hussars, and the Tshuguyev hussars; then there are chasseurs à cheval, and sharpshooters on foot; then there are cuirassiers, and grenadiers, and pioneers, and engineers; horse artillery, and foot artillery; to say nothing of dragoons, lancers, and those military plebeians, the troops of the line. All these, in their various uniforms, marching to parade, returning to their barracks, mounting guard, and passing through the other multifarious duties of a garrison life, are in themselves enough to give life and diversity to the streets.

If then we turn to the more pacific part of the population, devoted to the less brilliant, but certainly not less useful, pursuit of commerce, we find every nation of Europe, and almost every nation of Asia, represented in the streets of St. Petersburg. Spaniards and Italians, English and French, Greeks and Scandinavians may be seen mingling together; nor will the silken garments of the Persian and the Bokharian be wanting

to the picture, nor the dangling tail of the Chinese, nor the pearly teeth of the Arabian.

The *infima plebs* bears an outside as motley as the more aristocratic portion of the community. The German *Bauer* may be seen lounging among the noisy bearded Russians; the slim Pole elbows the diminutive Finlander; and Esthonians, Lettes and Jews are running up against each other, while the Mussulman studiously avoids all contact with the Jew. Yankee sailors and dwarfish Kamtshadales, Caucasians, Moors, and Mongolians, all sects, races, and colours contribute to make up the populace of the Russian capital.

Nowhere does the street life of St. Petersburg display itself to better effect than in the Nevskoi Prospekt. This magnificent street extends from the Alexander Nevskoi Monastery to the Admiralty, a distance of four versts. Towards the end it makes a slight bend, but throughout the greater part of its length it is perfectly straight. It intersects all the rings of the city; the suburbs of the poor, the showy regions of commerce, and the sumptuous quarters of the aristocracy. A walk along the whole length of this street, is one perhaps as interesting as any that can be made in St. Petersburg. Starting from the extreme end, where a monastery and a cemetery remind us of death and solitude, we first arrive at low little wooden houses, which lead us to a cattle-market, where around the spirit-shops may be seen swarms of noisy singing Russian peasants, presenting a picture not unlike what may daily be seen in the villages of the interior. A little farther on the houses improve in appearance; some are even of stone, and boast of an additional floor; the houses of public entertainment are of a better description, and shops and warehouses are seen similar to those of the small provincial towns. Next follow some markets and magazines for the sale of invalided furniture and superannuated apparel, which, having spent their youth in the service of the central quarters, are consigned in old age to the mercy of the suburbs. The houses, in the old Russian fashion, are painted yellow and red, and every man we meet displays a beard of venerable length, and a yet longer caftan. A little farther on, and we see a few *isvoshtshiks* who have strayed by chance so far from their more central haunts; a shaven chin and a swallow-tailed coat may be seen at intervals, and here and there a house assumes something like an air of stateliness and splendour. On arriving at the bend already mentioned, the huge gilt spire of the Admiralty is descried at a distance, floating apparently over the intervening mist. We cross a bridge, and begin to feel that we are in a mighty city. The mansions rise to three, and even to four stories, the inscriptions on the houses become larger and more numerous, carriages and four become more frequent, and every now and then the waving plume of a staff-officer dashes by. At length we arrive at the Fontanka Canal, cross the Anitshkof Bridge, and the Palace of Count B. announces at once that we have entered the aristocratic quarter of the capital. From this bridge to the Admiralty is what may be called the fashionable part of the Prospekt, and as we advance the bustle and the throng become greater and greater. Carriages-and-four at every step; generals and princes elbowing through the crowd; sumptuous shops, imperial palaces, cathedrals and churches of all the various religions and sects of St. Petersburg.

The scene in this portion of the street, at about midday, may challenge comparison with any street in the world, and the splendour of the spectacle

is enhanced by the magnificence of the decorations. This part of the street, though fully an English mile in length, does not contain more than fifty houses, each of which, it may easily be inferred, must be of colossal magnitude. Most of these buildings are the property of the several churches that border the street—the Dutch, the Catholic, the Armenian, and others, that received from Peter the Great large grants of land, of little value probably when first bestowed, but from which, as they are now in the heart of the city, splendid revenues are at present derived.

The street from the Anitshkof Bridge to the Admiralty is the favourite promenade with the *beau monde* of St. Petersburg. The buildings are magnificent, the equipages roll noiselessly over the wooden pavement of the centre, and the *trottoirs* on each side are broad and commodious. The people you meet are civil, and quarrels and disputes are never heard. The lower classes, from their childhood, are taught to behave respectfully to their more fortunate fellow-men, and, besides, the Slavonian is by nature more ductile and better rounded off than we of the Saxon race, who carry so many corners and crotchets about with us, that we need be careful, when we move through the streets, that we do not entangle ourselves with those we meet. The northern, being the sunny, is the favourite side of the street for the promenaders, and on that side, accordingly, are the most magnificent shops.

The garrison of St. Petersburg seldom amounts to less than 60,000 men, and constitutes, therefore, more than one-ninth of the population. Neither officer nor private must ever appear in public otherwise than in full uniform, and this may suffice to give some idea of the preponderance of the military over the civil costumes that one encounters in the streets. The wild Circassian, with his silver harness and his coat of mail, gaily converses and jest with the more polished Russian officer, while their several kinsmen are busily engaged in cutting each other's throats in the Caucasus. Even in the streets of St. Petersburg, however, it is more safe to avoid collision with these mountaineers, who are sudden and quick in quarrel, wear sharp daggers, and always carry loaded fire-arms about them. Even at a ball or a *soirée* they never lay their pistols aside, and these are never otherwise than ready for immediate use. Some years ago one Prince Ali acquired some notoriety by his wild pranks, but his handsome person and his general popularity seem to have secured for him a considerable share of impunity. In the crowded streets he would at times amuse himself with pistol practice, the sun usually serving him for a target. His faithful steed followed him about like a dog, and if the police offered to interfere with his diversion, he was in the saddle in a moment, and galloping away at full speed to some other quarter of the town. The sun was his usual target; but lamps and lamp-posts were sometimes selected, and occasionally, though not often, he turned the muzzle of his pistol upon those from whom he imagined himself to have received an affront. On one occasion he resented some disrespectful expressions applied to his mother in the Caucasus, by firing at the offender, but fortunately missed him; not, however, from any want of skill, but because an officer, who stood near him, was able, just in time, to thrust his arm aside.

It would not be saying too much, to say that half St. Petersburg are clad in a uniform of one sort or another. For, in addition to the 60,000



soldiers, there are civil uniforms for the public officers of every grade, for the police, for the professors of the university, and not only for the teachers, but likewise for the pupils of the public schools. Nor must the private uniforms be forgotten, that are worn by the numerous servants of the noble and wealthy families. Still there remain enough of plain coats to keep up the respectability of the fraternity. The whole body of merchants, the English factory, the German barons from the Baltic provinces, Russian princes and landowners from the interior, foreigners, private teachers, and many others, are well pleased to be exempt from the constraint of buttons and epaulets; indeed, so much that is really respectable walks about in simple black and blue, that a plain coat is felt by many to be rather a desirable distinction, although the wearer is obliged on all public occasions to yield the *pas* to the many-coloured coats of the civil and military *employés*.

The seasons and the variations of the weather bring about many, and often very sudden changes, in the street population of St. Petersburg, where the temperature is always capricious and unstable. In winter every one is cased in furs; in summer light robes of gauze and silk are seen fluttering in the breeze. In the morning the costumes are perhaps all light and airy, and in the evening of the same day none will venture to stir abroad otherwise than in cloaks and mantles. The sun shines, and swarms of dandies and *petites maîtresses* come fluttering abroad; it rains, and the streets are abandoned to the undisputed possession of the "Black People." One day all snow and sledges, the next all mud and clattering wheels.

Nor is it merely the change of weather that alters the physiognomy of the streets. The various sects that make up the population of the town give often a peculiar character to the day. On Friday, the holiday of the Moslems, the turbaned Turk, the black-bearded Persian, and the Tartar, with his shorn head, take their leisure in the streets. On Saturday, the black silk caftans of the Jews come abroad in great numbers; and on the Sunday the Christians of all denominations come forth to their pious exercises or their various diversions. The different sects of the Christians again tend to vary the scene. To-day the Lutherans celebrate their yearly day of penance, and German burghers, with their wives and children, and with their neat black gilt-edged hymn-books under their arms, sally forth on their pilgrimage to the church; to-morrow the Catholics are summoned to some feast or other of the immaculate Virgin, and Poles and Lithuanians, Frenchmen, and Austrians, hurry to their stately temples. The next day are heard the thousand bells of the Greek Kolokolniks, and the wives and daughters of the Russian merchants come humming and fluttering about the streets in their gaudy plumages of green, blue, yellow, and red. But the great days are the public holidays, the emperor's days as they are called, when all the modes and fashions current, from Paris to Peking, are certain to be paraded to the public gaze.

It has often been remarked that there are few cities where one sees so many handsome men as in St. Petersburg. This is partly owing to the prevalence of uniforms, which certainly set off the person to advantage, partly also to the fact that all the handsomest men in the provinces are constantly in demand as recruits for the various regiments of the guards. Something must also be attributed to the constant efforts of the Russians to give themselves the most agreeable forms. In no other town are there



so few cripples and deformed people; and this is not owing merely to their being less tolerated here than elsewhere, but also, it is said, to the fact, that the Slavonian race is less apt than any other to produce deformed children. On the other hand, at every step you meet men whose exterior you cannot but admire, and a moment's reflection must fill you with regret that there should be so few fair eyes to contemplate so many handsome specimens of manhood. St. Petersburg is unfortunately a city of men, the male sex being in a majority of at least 100,000, and the women by no means equally distinguished for their charms. The climate seems to be unfavourable to the development of female beauty; the tender plants quickly fade in so rude an atmosphere, and as they are so few in numbers, they are all the more in demand for the ballroom and the *soirée*, and are the more quickly used up by the friction of dissipation. Whether this be the cause, or whether the Russian women are naturally less handsome, comparatively, than the men, certain it is, that a fresh, handsome-looking girl is but rarely to be seen at St. Petersburg. The German ladies from the Baltic provinces form the exception; and it is from Finland, Livonia, Esthonia, and Courland, that the gay circles of the capital receive their chief supply of beauty. To this it may be owing that the Russians have so high an opinion of German beauty that they rarely withhold from a *Nyemka* (German woman) the epithet of *krassivaya*, or beautiful. The ladies at St. Petersburg, though in such great demand on account of their scarcity, are liable, from the same cause, to many inconveniences. For instance, it is impossible for them to walk in the streets, even in broad daylight, without a male escort.

The best hour for walking on the Prospekt is from 12 till 2, when the ladies go shopping, and the men go to look at the fair purchasers. Towards two or three o'clock, the purchases have been made, the parade is over, the merchants are leaving the exchange, the world of promenaders wend their way to the English quay, and the real promenade for the day begins, the imperial family usually mingling with the rest of the loungers. This magnificent quay, constructed, like all the quays of St. Petersburg, of huge blocks of granite, runs along the Neva from the New to the Old Admiralty, and was built during the reign of the Empress Catherine, who caused the canals and rivers of her capital, to the length of not less than 24 English miles, to be enclosed in granite. As in all water constructions, the colossal part of the work is not that which meets the eye. The mighty scaffolding on which the quay rests, stands deeply imbedded in the marshy soil below. Handsome steps, every here and there, lead down to the river; and for carriages large broad descents have been constructed, and these in winter are usually decorated with all sorts of fanciful columns and other ornaments, cut out of the ice. The houses along the English quay are deservedly called palaces. They were originally, for the most part, built by Englishmen, but are now, nearly all of them, the property of wealthy Russians.

The favourite walk in Hamburg is called the *Jungfernstieg*, or Maiden's Walk; the English quay in St. Petersburg ought to be called the Princes' Walk, for there daily the *élite* of the Russian empire may be seen wearing away the granite with their princely and noble feet. The carriages usually stop at the New Admiralty, where their noble owners descend, and honour the quay by walking up and down it some two or three times. There are no shops; and as the English quay is not a convenient thorough-

fare, the promenaders are seldom disturbed by the presence of any chance passengers. The Emperor and the imperial family are a centre to the groups that come to salute them and to be saluted by them. This forms a kind of connexion for the promenaders, and gives a oneness to the assembled company. The Emperor walks up and down upon an apparent footing of equality with his subjects around him; though these, in point of fact, stand about in the same relation to him, that a child's doll does to the Colossus of Rhodes. The Englishman buttons up his hatred of despotism in his great coat, and scarcely condescends to touch his hat when he meets the "Giant of the North;" while to the Russian by his side, a submissive demeanour has by habit become a positive source of enjoyment, till he feels a real affection for those to whom the law gives the right of ordering him about. The *élégant* of the French embassy, whose connexions with Paris ensure to him at all times the earliest information relative to the variations of the mode, is observed with as much interest by the native *petit maître*, as an insect would be observed by a naturalist; and be assured that the observations of to-day will be studiously turned to account by the observant student, when to-morrow he proceeds to the important avocations of his toilet. The baron or the reichsgraf from Germany, who can tell you his ancestors from before the times of the Hohenstaufens, and who delights to think that his great-grandchildren after him will be registered in the Gotha Almanac, walks here side by side with the Russian trader, who, like an *ignis fatuus*, has suddenly sprung from some fen or other, and whose name in a few years will disappear and leave no trace behind it, either in the annals of history or the columns of an almanac. The master of some vast estate, in the Ural mountains or on the arid Steppes, where thousands of souls must labour away for his exclusive profit, walks along the quay with as little pretension as the poor shopman, who can scarcely be said to have a property in his own soul, imbodied as it is in the gay garments, which he has such evident delight in displaying to an admiring world.

Among all the great men, however, that wander daily up and down the English quay, the two greatest are unquestionably the empress's footmen, who, in their purple uniform, attend the steps of their imperial mistress. These men, one of whom is said to be a Jew, are giants such as are but seldom seen at a fair. They are figures well known to every child in St. Petersburg, but they are said to be one inch shorter than another of the lions of the capital, the drum-major of the Semeneoff regiment of the guards, who may daily be admired at the Admiralty parade. Two Russian gentlemen, also well known to the St. Petersburg world, are said to dispute the palm of greatness with the footmen and the drum-major, but public opinion goes against their claim. Nor must Baron —n— be forgotten among the personal peculiarities of the English quay, from which he but rarely absents himself. His person is of such huge dimensions, that he is said not to have seen his own feet for thirty years, yet so dexterously and with so much elegance does he carry the enormous weight with which those feet are charged, that he passes at nearly every ball for the best dancer in the room; so much so, that for a waltz or a gallopade the ladies are said to value him as a partner beyond the slenderest dandy that woos them to the merry round. Then there's Count F., as far from a sansculotte as any count can well be, but not the less a *sans chapeau*, for he can endure no covering on his head, and walks about without a hat

even on the coldest day in winter, all owing wind and snow to frolic at their leisure among the dainty curls always tastefully arranged around his undaunted summit. In endurance he is surpassed only by Peter the Great, the huge man of bronze that stands perched upon his rock, and whose equanimity remains undisturbed even when crows pour forth their monotonous eloquence from his crown, or when a pair of loving sparrows chirrup forth their compliments from his nose. Another of the remarkable figures pointed out to every stranger, is a *petit maître* of the old school, one Mr. —g—, who figures upon the promenade in the same costume in which he figured there forty years ago, in the time of the Emperor Paul. The stationary beau is said to have been one day so terrified by a rebuke from his emperor, that the clockwork of his understanding has stood still ever since, and now continues pointing to the hour which it struck at the setting in of our century.

Another promenade much frequented is the Summer Garden. The other gardens, as that of the Tauride Palace, and that of the Grand Duke Michael's Palace, are but little visited. The Summer Garden, which lies on the Neva, close to the Trotskoi bridge, is about one thousand ells long and five hundred broad. It is the oldest garden in the city, contains a number of fine old trees, and is therefore of incalculable value in the centre of the stony masses of the city. It is laid out in a number of long avenues, interspersed with flowerbeds, somewhat in the ancient style of gardening, with an abundance of marble statues of Springs and Summers, Floras and Fauns, and other divinities belonging to the same coterie. On the northern side is the celebrated iron railing, with its fanciful garlands and arabesques, which the people will tell you an Englishman once travelled all the way from London to see and make a sketch of, and then returned, satisfied with his journey, not deigning to cast an eye on any of the other marvels of the northern city. This garden is attended to as carefully almost as those of Zarskoye Selo, where a policeman is said to run after every leaf that falls, that it may instantly be removed out of sight. In autumn all the statues are cased in wooden boxes, to protect them against the rain and snow of winter, and all the tender trees and shrubs are at the same time packed up in straw and matting, in which they remain till the return of spring, when statues, trees, and men lay their winter garments aside nearly at one and the same time. The grassplots are regularly watered in summer, and the paths are carefully cleaned and trimmed. And the garden gratefully repays the pains expended on it, for throughout the fine season it forms a delightful retreat, and its turf and its trees in spring are green and smiling, before any of the other gardens have been able to divest themselves of the chill-hardened grin into which their features have been stiffened during a six months' winter.

In one corner of the Summer Garden stands the palace in which dwelt Peter the Great. It is a little, low, white house, with a few tasteless bas-reliefs painted yellow. On the roof between the chimneys, St. George, mounted on a tin horse, is in the act of piercing the dragon. In the interior, a few articles of furniture formerly used by Peter, are still preserved. The house seems to have grown ashamed of its littleness, for it hides itself completely among the tall linden-trees of the garden, as though fearful of intruding into the company of the stately palaces that have grown up around. Still it twinkles every now and then with its old-fashioned windows through the foliage as if it took a pleasure in the proud children to



which it has given birth. How differently it must have looked when it was yet sole lord of the wilderness, when it stood there, the only elegant among a mob of fishers' huts! The 500,000 square ells of ground which the garden occupies here in the centre of the town, would be worth at least twenty millions of rubles, if sold for building on. The city may, therefore, be said to sacrifice a yearly revenue of a million of rubles, by allowing the garden to remain; yet the city acts wisely, in submitting to the loss, from which it derives more than the value of a million of rubles in cheerfulness and health.

It is particularly in the Summer Garden that the rising generation of St. Petersburg may be said to take their diversion. Hither it is that the little ladies repair with their governesses, the tutors with their little embryo generals and senators, the nurses with their tender charges. It is impossible to imagine a prettier spectacle than all the handsome little Cossacks, Circassians, and Mushnicks, that romp about the Summer Garden on a fine day. The Russians of all ranks are fond of dressing their children, till they are seven or eight years old, *à la moujik*, as it is called. The hair is cut short, as it is usually worn by the peasantry, and the little fellows are then arrayed in pretty caftans neatly fastened with girdles, nearly of the same fashion as those worn by the Gostinnoi Dvor merchants, with high Tartar caps like those worn by the Russian coachmen. Lately the Circassian costume has been in favour for children, and becomes them admirably, with its silver embroidery and edgings of fur. Only when children come to be nine or ten years old do they begin to dress like Europeans. This, however, applies only to the boys, for little girls, as soon as they can walk, are decked out in the fashions of Paris. The same remarks apply to the children of the imperial family, as to those of the nobility generally.

As it is from among these young frequenters of the Summer Garden, that the future admirals, generals, and statesmen of the empire are probably to be chosen, it is impossible not to observe them with some degree of interest. Next to their costume, their language is the most remarkable thing about them. As they have Russian servants and nurses, English and French nursery-maids, and German teachers, they usually learn all the four languages at the same time, and as it is not easy for them at first to keep the several dialects distinct, they mix them up into an idiomatic ragout, highly amusing to a stranger, but which to the children themselves must often cause a great confusion of ideas. It is nothing uncommon, for instance, to hear a child express itself in this fashion: "Papa, I have been in the letnoi sad; Feodor s'namî buil; est ce que vous n'irez pas." (Papa, I have been in the Summer Garden; Feodor was with us; will you not go.)

The adult Russians generally speak a yet greater number of languages, though, of course, more correctly; but it is remarkable that, linguists as they are, they seldom borrow a term of endearment from any language but that of their land. The Russian is indeed singularly rich in pretty, coaxing, insinuating diminutives; such as, *lubesnoi*, my dear; *milinkoi*, my little dear; *dădushka*, my little grandpapa; *matiuska*, my little mamma; *drushka*, my little friend; *golubtshik*, my little dove; *dushinka*, my little soul. Nor are these expressions confined to the Russians. Few strangers are long in the country, without acquiring the habit of ingrafting upon their own languages the Russian terms of endearment.

The most brilliant day in the year for the Summer Garden is Whitmon-



day, when the celebrated festival of the choosing of brides takes place. According to the ancient customs of Russia, the sons and daughters of the traders assemble on that day, those to see, and these to be seen. The young damsels, arrayed in all their finery, are marshalled in due order along the flower-beds, and their mammas are carefully stationed behind them. Every glittering ornament has been collected for the occasion, and not only their own wardrobes, but those of their grandmothers too, have been laid under contribution to collect decorations for the hair, the ears, the arms, the neck, the hands, the feet, the girdle, or, in short, for any part of the person to which by hook or by crook any thing in the shape of adornment can be fastened. Many of them are so laden with gold and jewellery, that scarcely any part of their natural beauty remains uncovered. It is even said that, on one of these occasions, a Russian mother, not knowing what she should add to her daughter's toilet, contrived to make her a necklace of six dozen of gilt teaspoons, a girdle of an equal number of tablespoons, and then fastened a couple of punchladles behind in the form of a cross.

The young men meanwhile, with their flowing caftans and curled beards, are paraded by their papas, up and down, before these rows of young, mute, blushing beauties, who, in spite of their bashful looks, are evidently ambitious to please, and seem little disposed to resent the admiration of the swains. The papas and mammas endeavour here and there to engage their interesting charges in conversation with each other; and in the course of these little colloquies, certain looks and emotions will betray an unsuspected inclination, or perhaps give birth to sentiments pregnant with future moment.

Eight days after this first bride-show, the interviews take place at the houses of the parents, when, by means of family negotiations, a marriage is all but concluded, and the young couple part all but betrothed to each other. Similar customs prevail among all the nations of the Slavonian races, but it is a singular fact that a usage of the kind should have maintained its ground so long in a place like St. Petersburg, where a numerous part of the public has ever been disposed to make the bride-show an object of ridicule. Of late years, indeed, the fashion has been gradually dying away, and the description given above applies rather to former than to the present times. Nevertheless, the lads and lasses of what may be called the bourgeoisie of St. Petersburg, still muster in the Summer Garden in great force on Whitmonday, when the foundation is laid for many a matrimonial negotiation; though the business is conducted with less form and stiffness than was wont to be the case some ten years ago.

On one side of the Summer Garden is the Tzarizinskoi Lug, or Field of the Czars, which has somewhat inappropriately been translated into Champ de Mars. This place is more used than any other for exercising troops, though there are several other parade places in the city, and many of them much larger than the Champ de Mars. The Alexandrofskoi Platz-parad, the largest of all, occupies fully a square verst, but lies on the outskirts of the capital. The chief parade, however, is held in the square of the Admiralty, and forms one of the daily enjoyments of many of the inhabitants.

The Admiralty is surrounded by a boulevard and a double row of trees. Under these trees the spectators usually walk about during the time of the parade. The emperor generally commands in person; and as there are

always present several thousand men, and a host of generals and staff officers, this simple parade forms at all times a handsome spectacle, and may, in fact, pass for a miniature review. To see the emperor ride by with his brilliant staff is itself worth seeing. He is a handsome majestic-looking man. By his side rides his eldest son, and behind him follow a cloud of cavaliers, of whom each is at the least a prince's son and a major-general. As this splendid *cortège* advances, the soldiers, drawn up in line, present their arms, and the spectators uncover their heads. "Good morning, children!" is the emperor's salutation; "We thank your majesty," is the response that comes thundering in unison from thousands of throats. The parade often lasts several hours; and whoever has witnessed a portion of it, taken a stroll down the Nevskoi Prospekt, looked into the Summer Garden, and walked up and down the English Quay, may quiet his conscience with the reflection that he has neglected no part of the St. Petersburg promenades for that day.

A stranger has no occasion, however, to go to the parade, if his object is merely to see the emperor, who may be met with on foot, on horseback, or in a droshky, in all parts of St. Petersburg, and at every hour of the day. There is no other monarch who appears to have so much business to do in the streets as the successor of Peter the Great. There are public institutions to be inspected, the offices of the different departments of government to be visited, reviews to be held, national festivals at which he is expected to attend, new buildings to be superintended, not to speak of the many private visits paid to those whom he is disposed to honour with so high a mark of favour.

Wherever the emperor appears in public, he does so in the most simple and unpretending manner that can be imagined. His usual vehicle, when driving through the streets of his capital, is a sledge or a droshky, drawn by a single horse; and when travelling, his telegue is a rude carriage, little better than those used by the serfs. This is the more remarkable, as in other respects the Russian court is one of greater pomp and magnificence than any other in Europe. Yet I doubt whether the pettiest of all the petty princes of Germany, would not think himself affronted, if he were invited to take his place in such a small plain droshky, as the Emperor of all the Russias daily makes use of. This is not, however, a custom peculiar to the present emperor; it was adopted by Peter the Great, and has been followed by all his successors.

The superintendence of the street-population of St. Petersburg is entrusted to a class of men called *butshniks*, a name for which they are indebted to the *butki*, or boxes, in which they are stationed night and day. These little wooden boxes are to be seen at every corner, and to each box three *butshniks* are assigned, who have their beds there, their kitchen, and a complete domestic establishment. One of them, wrapped up in a grey cloak faced with red, and armed with a halbert, stands sentinel outside, while another attends to the culinary department, and a third holds himself ready to carry orders, or to convey to the *Siäsh*, or police-office, the unfortunates whom his comrade may have thought it his duty to arrest. Each *butshnik* has a small whistle, by means of which he conveys a signal to the next post, if a fugitive is to be given chase to. The *quartalnicks* are a superior kind of police-officers, and these and the police-masters are constantly going their rounds, to see that the *butshniks* are not neglectful of their duty. By these means, excellent order is always

maintained, and in no other capital of Europe are riotous or offensive scenes of less frequent occurrence. At night, in addition to the day-police, small detachments of mounted *gens-d'armes* parade the streets.

The only inhabitants of the capital not liable to the inspection of the police are the crows and pigeons. These birds abound there to an astonishing extent. They fly about free and undisturbed every where. The crows congregate in the greatest numbers at the Anitshkoff Palace in the Nevskoi Prospekt, where many thousands often assemble in the evening to edify the passing public with their loud and earnest conversations. It has been noticed that they always perch upon a green roof in preference to a black or red one; perhaps the green may seem to bear more affinity to the foliage of the trees they love to build among. The pigeons are sacred in the eyes of every Russian; and as no one would dare to harm them, they become so bold, that they walk carelessly about among a crowd in search of their food, and scarcely make way either for a carriage or a foot-passenger. Nevertheless, they are in a half-wild and neglected condition, and build their nests chiefly about the roofs of the churches. They have their nests also under the roofs of the markets, and particularly among the columns of Gostinnoi Dvor, where the merchants in their hours of leisure take a great delight in feeding and caressing them. In the inner courts of the houses of St. Petersburg there are always large holes or boxes that serve as receptacles for every kind of dirt and rubbish which it is thought desirable to remove to the outside of the house. About these filthy boxes there may at times be seen whole swarms of pigeons feeding on all kinds of garbage, and the only wonder is that the Russians should retain any affection for birds that degenerate so woefully in Russia as to fight, like so many wolves, for putrid meat and fish entrails. Nevertheless, it is thought a species of sacrilege to kill a pigeon. Boys may sometimes indeed be seen running about with sticks, to the end of which cords are fastened, and to the end of the cord a button or a stone. This cord they throw dexterously round the necks of the pigeons, as the South Americans throw their lasso round the neck of an ox. The pigeons thus caught are sold to the profane Germans, who are said to convert the holy birds into heatherish ragouts, or to bake them in sacrilegious pies.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE ISVOSHTSHIKS.

THE vast space occupied by a Russian city, with its broad endless streets, and its wide waste public squares and places, makes it probable that the institution of hackney-carriages is one of very remote origin in Russia. In other countries, the convenience is one known only to large towns; but in Russia, such is the aversion of the people to walking, that, as soon as a few thousand human beings have been collected into the same vicinage, a due supply of *isvoshtshiks* becomes one of the most urgent wants of the

new community. From this, some notion may be formed of the army of isvoshtshiks collected together on the pavement of the capital. They are estimated, in some statistical returns I have seen, at 8000. In some quarters you may see hundreds at one glance; and when we consider that the length of all the streets of St. Petersburg amounts to nearly 400 versts, it cannot be an extravagant estimate to reckon twenty-five hackney-carriages to every verst.

We have already seen that there are in one place in St. Petersburg three houses, side by side, to pass which on foot will occupy a man a good half hour. A morning visit, a dinner, and an evening visit, might cost him his whole day. In winter the streets are full of a deep snow dust, formed of the numberless crystals of ice that are constantly undergoing the process of being ground up into fine powder, and through which it is about as tedious to wade as through the sands of Sahara. The rude northern blast, moreover, that ranges uncontrolled through the wide airy streets, makes every man glad enough to creep into a sledge, where he may draw his mantle over his face, and wrap himself, head and all, in furs. In spring, one-half of St. Petersburg is a mere bog, and in summer the intolerable dust actually stops one's breath, and relaxes all the muscles of the feet. No wonder, therefore, that the most resolute pedestrian soon grows tired of using his own feet in St. Petersburg, and in utter despair roars out his "Davai! Isvoshtshik!" to the first droshky stand.

He will seldom have occasion to "sing out" his *davai* a second time. Nay, a man need not even look at the serviceable equipages, for if he only stand still for a moment, and seem to deliberate in his own mind upon the expediency of summoning a charioteer to his assistance, the hint is quite sufficient, and half-a-dozen sledges will immediately come darting up to the spot where he stands. The oat-bags are quickly thrown aside, the harness drawn tight, and each of the rival candidates for favour places himself upon his box, satisfied apparently that he, and he alone, will bear away the prize. "Where to, sir?"—"To the Admiralty."—"Ill go for two rubles"—"I for one and a half," cries another, and so they go on underbidding each other, till they come down perhaps to half a ruble. You take the cheapest, probably, but take care the cheapest be not also the worst, or you must be prepared for a volley of jokes and banterings from the disappointed applicants. "Ah, do but look, little father, how stingy you are!"—"To save a few copeks, you put up with that ragged rascal for your coachman."—"He and his three-legged animal will stick fast before you get half way."—"The gray-bearded vagabond will be sure to upset you; he's so drunk he can't stand."—"He'll take you to the shambles, and swear it's the Admiralty."—No one enjoys all this abuse, meanwhile, more than the object of it, who laughs in his sleeve, and grumbles out his "Nitshevoss! never fear, sir; we shall get on well enough."

These men are, for the most part, Russians from all the different governments of the empire; but among them there are also Finlanders, Esthonians, Lettes, Poles, and Germans. They arrive at St. Petersburg generally as little boys of ten or twelve years old, hire themselves as drivers to some owner of hackney-carriages, whom they continue to serve till they have saved enough to buy a horse and vehicle, when they set up in business on their own account. Their trade, as all trades are in Russia, is uncontrolled by corporation laws; and should fodder grow dear,



or business slack, the isvoshtshik packs up the few worldly goods he possesses, drives away to the south, and reappears in the streets of Novgorod or Moscow; thus, in pursuit of fortune, they emerge now in one town and now in another, till chance enable them to form a profitable and permanent establishment in some one place. In the provincial towns, where fodder is to be had for little or nothing, they usually drive with *two* horses, but in St. Petersburg, where every thing, in comparison, is enormously dear, the public must content themselves with *one*.

In winter the isvoshtshik uses the favourite national vehicle of a sledge, with which he continues to grind the pavement as long as the least trace of snow is to be felt under the spring mud. A covered carriage he never uses. The cloaks and furs of the passengers must do the same service in Russia that the roof of the coach does with us; and when well wrapped up in a series of protecting folds, the warm nucleus of life that occupies the centre, patiently suffers the pelting of snow, rain, and mud till the end of his journey, where the dirty rind is peeled off, and the said kernel steps forth clean and unspotted from his muddy covering.

The isvoshtshiks of St. Petersburg appear to be a race of Hamaxobites,\* leading a sort of nomadic life among the palaces of the capital. They encamp by day in the streets, and so do many of them during the night, their sledge serving them at once as house and bed. Like the Bedouin Arabs, they carry the oat-bag constantly with them, and fasten it, during their intervals of leisure, to the noses of their steeds. In every street arrangements have been made for the convenience of the isvoshtshiks. Every here and there mangers are erected for their use; to water their horses, there are in all parts of the town convenient descents to the canals or to the river; and hay is sold at a number of shops in small bundles, just sufficient for one or two horses. To still the thirst and hunger of the charioteers themselves, there are peripatetic dealers in quass, tea, and bread, who are constantly wandering about the streets for the charitable purpose of feeding the hungry. The animals are as hardy as their masters. Neither care for cold or rain, both eat as opportunity serves, and are content to take their sleep when it comes. Yet they are always cheerful, the horses ever ready to start off at a smart trot, the drivers at all times disposed for a song, a joke, or a gossip. When they are neither eating, nor engaged in any other serious occupation, they lounge about their sledges, singing some simple melody that they have probably brought with them from their native forests. Where several of them happen to be together at the corner of a street, they are sure to be engaged in some game or other, pelting with snow-balls, wrestling, or bantering each other, till the "Davai, isvoshtshik!" of some chance passenger makes them all grasp their whips in a moment, and converts them into eager competitors for the expected gain.

The poorest isvoshtshiks in St. Petersburg are the Finlanders. Their droshky is often little more than a board nailed over the axles of their wheels, and their little shaggy, ragged, bony horses look like the very emblems of hunger and misery. Scarcely covered by their tattered caftans, they station themselves in the remote quarters of the town, and themselves poor, afford the use of their four wheels to poverty for a mode-

\*Dwellers in waggons.

rate fee. In the more fashionable and central quarters, on the other hand, equipages of first-rate elegance offer their service to the public, with every thing about them à quatre épingles. A fine black steed, with a coat shining like satin, the harness glittering like a lady's ball-dress; a light delicate sledge, with a cloth richly lined with fur, and an isvoshtshik in a magnificent beard, and a caftan fit for a Turkish pasha. Such vehicles are not to be put in motion for any thing less than a blue note, and are intended to impress a credulous public with the belief that they are private and not hired carriages; for in St. Petersburg it is thought *très mauvais genre* for a lady to allow herself to be driven by an isvoshtshik; and a woman above the rank of a chambermaid or a tradesman's wife would scarcely venture to make use of such a conveyance. The men are less particular. Even those of the highest station do not refuse, on an emergency, to avail themselves of the services of an isvoshtshik.

It is not customary for a Russian noble to put a livery on his coachman, who is almost always clad in the old national costume. If, therefore, you hire one of these smart isvoshtshiks, all you have to do is to order him to slip his number under his caftan, and nobody can tell whether the driver and his steed are not, bodies and soul of them, your undisputed freehold property. Indeed, these handsome equipages on the public stands are said sometimes to be the private carriages of individuals, who, during their absence from the capital, convert their coachmen into isvoshtshiks. St. Petersburg is at all times crowded with civil and military officers, who are liable without any previous notice to be sent away suddenly to a distant part of the empire, and who are willing that their horses should earn their oats in the public service while their masters are away.

As there are no fixed fares, you must each time bargain with your driver when you hire him; but the fellows are, in general, moderate enough, and will take you a tolerably long way for a few pence. Their demands indeed are apt to rise in proportion as the weather becomes less inviting to pedestrianism, or as the calendar announces the recurrence of a public holiday. There are days when they will not bate a copek of their demands; and in the busy part of the day they will not take less than two rubles for a course, which in the morning or the evening they are ready to go for half a one. On ordinary occasions they are reasonable and obliging enough, and will often carry you for nothing from one side to the other of a muddy street.

You may know what countryman your irvoshtshik is, by the way in which he treats his horses. The German is sure to be the most reasonable. He speaks little to any body, and to his horse not at all. His reins and his whip form the only medium of communication between the man and the animal. The Finlander sits a quiet picture of indifference, only now and then brings out a long drawling "*Naw! naw!*" through his teeth, and from the varied intonations of the one word, the horse is expected to divine the wishes of its master. The calabistic word of the Lette is "*Nooa, nooa!*" but to this he has recourse only in moments of great emergency; when, for instance, his horse manifests a disposition not to stir from the spot, or a piggish determination to go any way rather than the way he is wanted to go. The most restless of charioteers is the Pole, who wriggles incessantly about, and whistles, hisses and howls without intermission, while the shaking of his reins and the cracking of his whip are

kept up with equal perseverance. The Russian coachman, on the other hand, seems to trust more to the persuasiveness of his own eloquence, than to any thing else. He seldom uses his whip, and generally only knocks with it upon the foot-board of his sledge, by way of a gentle admonition to his steed, with whom meanwhile he keeps up a running colloquy, seldom giving him harder words than: "my brother," "my friend," "my little father," "my sweetheart," "my little white pigeon," &c. "Come, my pretty pigeon, make use of thy legs," he will say. "What now? art blind? come be brisk! Take care of that stone there. Dost not see it? There, that's right. Bravo! hop, hop, hop! steady, boy, steady! Now, what art turning thy head aside for? Look out boldly before thee! Huzza! Yuhk, yuhk!"

One very important thing to know is, that our isvoshtshik, for the period of the drive, has become our serf, and that if we are people to abuse our power, we may assume the lord and master with impunity. If we speak to him, he will never think of replying to us otherwise than bareheaded. Our scolding he receives with a cheerful and submissive smile, our commands with prompt obedience. If he is to drive faster, the intimation is conveyed to him in the way intimations are usually conveyed to slaves, namely, through the medium of his back, on which the hand of his temporary master writes down the order in a legible character. A Russian is born with a bridle round his neck, and every man whose hand is firm enough may seize the reins, and guide at his will the harnessed serf; but he whose hand is too weak to keep a tight hold of the reins, must be prepared to find more self-will about a Russian, than about the citizen of the freest nation in the universe.

These, however, are reflections too serious for our present purpose. Put your isvoshtshik into good humour by a kind word or two, and you'll have your pleasure out of the lad. Though he be but a boy, he looks briskly and boldly into the wild confusion of a St. Petersburg street, guides his horse dexterously through the throng of carriages, and keeps up a running fire of words, addressed now to his horse, and now to those he meets. "*Padyee, padyee!*" (Place, place!) he cries to the tedious waggon that bars his progress; "*Beregissa!*" (Have a care!) to the inattentive pedestrian. Should the crowd not be great, he suits his words to the rank and character of those he addresses. "Old soldier, step aside there!" "My little mother, have a care!" To those who abuse him he is not slow in his replies, which are generally quick and cutting; but though he talk and jest incessantly, nothing that passes in the street escapes his attention. To one of his fraternity whom he meets, he points out any little deficiency in his harness, and to another who has not heard the call of a customer, he cries, "He, brother, art sleeping? folks call thee, and thou nearest not! attention, boy, attention!"

Though you speak no Russian, you will seldom find it difficult to make yourself understood to your isvoshtshik, who is in general quite a cosmopolite and a man of the world, compared to those of his calling in other countries. He has had to deal with nearly all the nations of Asia in his time, and individuals from every country in Europe have held converse with him. Men of all orders and degrees, from the beggar to the emperor, have sat behind his back. He knows how to demean himself suitably to each, and has a smattering of every language. He knows a little Tartar and a little French; can understand some German, and is not altogether



ignorant of English; and then, as to the language of eyes, fingers, and gesticulation, in these he is sure to be at home. If he have an Italian behind him, he will abuse his horse with an "*Ecco kakoi canaille, signor,*" and a Mahometan he will be equally certain to commend to the protection of Allah.

The constant plague of the isvoshtshik is the pedestrian, who in Russia is invested with immense privileges. In other countries a man thinks himself bound to take care that he is not run over; but in Russia, he who walks afoot troubles himself but little about the matter, and thinks the coachman alone is bound to be careful. If the horse or carriage merely touch a foot passenger, without even throwing him down, the driver is liable to be flogged and fined; should the pedestrian be thrown down, a flogging, Siberia, and the confiscation of the whole equipage, are the mild penalties imposed by the law. "Have a care," cries the isvoshtshik. "Have a care thyself, and remember Siberia," is the probable reply of the leisurely wayfarer. The moment the cry is raised that a man has been run over, a brace of butshniks rush out from their watchboxes, and the carriage, whomsoever it may belong to, is carried away as a police prize. The poor coachman is immediately bound, and the flattering prospect of an emigration to Siberia is immediately held forth to him, whether the accident have arisen from his own fault or not. Cases of great severity sometimes occur; but it is difficult to point out any other way of checking the wild way of driving in which the nobles frequently indulge. As it is, they are always urging their poor fellows to go faster, and the consequence is, that, wide as the streets are, and severe as the law is, accidents are constantly occurring, and every now and then you hear that this prince's fine four-in-hand is in the clutches of the police, or that that count's coachman is undergoing an inquiry.

I was once witness myself of a ludicrous scene to which the dread of these severe enactments gave rise. The equipage of the Countess T. came rolling down the Nevskoi Prospekt, and had the misfortune to throw down a poor old woman, but, as was afterwards found, without doing her any other harm than frightening her. The ladies in the carriage fainted, but the coachman, having a lively picture of Siberia and the knout before his mind's eye, put his whip into motion immediately, and the horses dashed off at a full gallop. All the butshniks in the neighbourhood joined immediately in the chase, for on these occasions they give each other a signal. To seize the spirited horses by the reins was impossible; but a few of the servitors of the police, bolder than their fellows, clung to the carriage behind, in the hope, probably, that, as it must stop some time or other, they would be able to make good their prize in the end. Coach, coachman, and horses, appeared all irretrievably lost. Prince L., an active young man and a friend of the countess, perceiving the danger to which she was exposed, rushed upon the carriage, and by main force tore away the two fellows that were clinging to it, and flung them into the snow. The butshniks, furious at the loss of their prize, now fell upon the poor prince, whom they dragged away to their wooden house; but he struggled and kept the door open till he recognised among the crowd some powerful acquaintance, through whose intercession he was enabled to escape the consequences of his good-natured infraction of the laws.

The world cannot present a more singular, or, in its way, a more magnificent spectacle, than the display of carriages in the Prospekt on a



fine winter's day. The street is covered by a smooth hard surface of snow, over which the equipages rush silently along, the snorting of the steeds, and the admonishing ejaculations of the drivers, being the only sounds that are heard. There is something quite intoxicating in driving up and down through the wild bounding sea of equipages. The palaces on both sides are gaily arrayed by the beams of the sun; the street, though broad, is filled to overflowing; the equipages are of all kinds and dimensions; here a modest *isvoshtshik* dashes along with a spruce clerk or a smart chambermaid behind him; there a splendid coach and four, filled with ladies, moves more leisurely along, and seems, compared to our humble sledges, a man-of-war sailing proudly among a fleet of cock-boats. Coaches and two announce the less ostentatious merchant. Handsome single-horse vehicles, meanwhile, are flying like lightning through the crowd, and "*Shiväye, shiväye!*" (Faster, faster!) is the constant cry of the well-starred magnificoes within. These are the generals and ministers hurrying to their offices and various appointments, and parading their diamonds in so modest an equipage, in imitation of the emperor, while their wives are using up the breath of four steeds at least. Nay, the emperor himself, enveloped in his cloak, but unobserved by none, may pierce the throng, for his affairs are numberless in all quarters of the town. *Gossudar!* *gossudar!* (The lord! the lord!) flies from mouth to mouth, and almost at the same moment the apparition has passed away. *Padyee, padyee, padyee!* cry the little postilions, in a sharp and sustained note. A stranger, though he forget all else of Russian that he learned at St. Petersburg, will not forget the *padyee, läviyee, präviyee*, and *beregissa*, with which the charioteers steer their course through so arduous a navigation: and if there be nothing else which he has learned to love in Russia, he will at least love the recollection of his sledge-promenades, and will remember, with some kindness, his dexterous and willing *isvoshtshik*.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE WINTER.

In the year 1836, and in the month of December, a man threw a piece of apple-peel out of his little air window in Moscow. The peel of the apple did not reach the street, but happening to strike against the ledge of the window, froze fast to it, and remained icebound on its way from the window to the street, till it was set free by a thaw somewhere in the month of February, and was enabled to complete the journey on which it had set out six weeks and three days previously. This may afford a tolerable notion of the severity and perseverance of a Moscovite winter.

Such a thing could not have occurred in St. Petersburg, for in the marshy delta of the Neva the temperature is more variable than in central Russia. The icy winds that blow from Siberia are in some measure tempered by the influence of the Baltic. Rainy westwinds, freezing northeasters, thick

fogs, and cheerful frosty days, are succeeding each other constantly, and keep up a struggle for mastery throughout the whole of the six months' winter. A man is as little secure against rain and mud in January, as against frost and snow in April. In Moscow, on the contrary, the sky was never known to drop a single tear of rain in December; and neither among the records of the city, nor the traditions of its inhabitants, will you trace one instance of a pair of boots having been spotted with mud in January.

In St. Petersburg, nevertheless, the thermometer falls much more frequently to a very low point than in Moscow, where the average temperature for the whole winter is considerably higher than in the newer capital. The climate of St. Petersburg oscillates continually between two extremes. In summer the heat often rises to  $+ 30^{\circ}$  ( $99^{\circ}$  of Fahrenheit), and in winter the cold as often falls to  $- 30^{\circ}$  ( $55^{\circ}$  below Fahrenheit's zero). This gives to the temperature a range of  $154^{\circ}$  of Fahrenheit, which probably exceeds that of any other city in Europe. It is not merely in the course of the year, however, but in the course of the same twenty-four hours, that the temperature is liable to great variations. In summer, after a hot sultry morning, a rough wind will set in towards evening, and drive the thermometer down  $12^{\circ}$ \* immediately. In winter also there is often a difference of  $12^{\circ}$  or  $18^{\circ}$  between the temperature of the morning and that of the night. It would be impossible to preserve existence in such a climate, if man did not endeavour to counteract its fickleness by his own unchangeableness. In Germany, where the transitions are less sudden, we endeavour to follow the vagaries of the weather, by putting on a cloak one day and leaving it off the next, by putting an additional log or two into the stove, or by economising our fuel. In St. Petersburg people are less variable in their arrangements. The winter is considered to begin in October and end in May, and in the beginning of October every man puts on his furs, which are calculated for the severest weather that can come, and these furs are not laid aside again till the winter is legitimately and confessedly at an end. The stoves, meanwhile, are always kept heated in winter, that the house may never cool. Inconsiderate foreigners attempt sometimes to follow the caprices of the climate, and often pay for their temerity with illness and death.

It is only when the cold falls to an unusual degree of severity that any change takes place. When the thermometer stands at  $- 20^{\circ}$  every man pricks up his ears, and becomes a careful observer of its risings and fallings. At  $- 23^{\circ}$  or  $24^{\circ}$  the police are put on the alert, and the officers go round day and night, to see that the sentinels and butshniks keep awake. Should any one be found nodding at his post, he is summarily and severely punished, for sleep at such a time is a sure state of transition from life to death. At  $- 25^{\circ}$  all the theatres are closed, as it is then thought impossible to adopt the necessary precautions for the safety of the actors on the stage, and of the coachmen and servants waiting in the street. The pedestrians, who at other times are rather leisurely in their movements, now run along the streets as though they were hastening on some mission of life and death, and the sledges dash in *tempo celerrissimo* over the creaking snow. I don't know the reason, but  $20^{\circ}$

\* Throughout the present work, Réaumur's thermometer must always be understood to be the standard by which the temperature is measured. Each degree of Réaumur is equivalent to  $2\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$  of Fahrenheit.

of cold in St. Petersburg signify a great deal more than in Germany, and are attended by more injurious consequences. Faces are not to be seen in the streets, for every man has drawn his furs over his head, and leaves but little of his countenance uncovered. Everyone is uneasy about his nose and his ears; and as the freezing of these desirable appendages to the human face divine is not preceded by any uncomfortable sensation to warn the sufferer of his danger, he has enough to think of if he wish to keep his extremities in order. "Father, father, thy nose!" one man will cry to another as he passes him, or will even stop and apply a handful of snow to the stranger's face, and endeavour, by briskly rubbing the nasal prominence, to restore the suspended circulation. These are salutations to which people are accustomed, and as no man becomes aware of the fact when his own nose has assumed the dangerous chalky hue, custom prescribes among all who venture into the streets, a kind of mutual observance of each other's noses, a custom by which many thousands of these valued organs are yearly rescued from the clutches of the Russian Boreas. A man's eyes at this season cost him some trouble likewise, for they are apt to freeze up every now and then. On such occasions it is customary to knock at the door of the first house you come to, and ask permission to occupy a place for a few minutes by the stove. This is a favour never denied, and the stranger seldom fails to acknowledge it on his departure, by dropping a grateful tear on the hospitable floor.

At twenty degrees of cold there are few St. Petersburg mothers who would allow their children to go into the open air. Ladies venture abroad only in close carriages, of which every aperture is closed by slips of fur. There are families at this season who will spend weeks without once tasting a mouthful of fresh air, and, at last, when the cold has reached its extreme point, none are to be seen in the streets but the poorest classes, unless it be foreigners, people in business, or officers. As to these last, the parades and mountings of guard are never interrupted by any degree of cold, and while the frost is hard enough to cripple a stag, generals and colonels of the guard may be seen in their glittering uniforms moving as nimbly and as unconcernedly about the windy Admiralty-square, as though they were promenading a ball-room. Not a particle of a cloak must be seen about them; not a whisper of complaint must be heard. The emperor's presence forbids both, for he exposes himself unhesitatingly to wind, snow, hail, and rain, and expects from his officers the same disregard of the inclemencies of the season.

The Russian stoves are in their way the most complete things that can be imagined. They are built up with glazed tiles, and such are the multitudinous passages, ascending and descending, that before the heat emitted by the fire has found its way into the chimney, it has often a distance of a hundred feet in length to pass through. The huge mass of stone which composes the stove is a long time before it gets warm; but, once warm, it retains the heat for a whole day. Almost the only wood used in St. Petersburg as fuel is the wood of the birch tree. It is the cheapest to be had in the neighbourhood, and its embers are more lasting than those of the pine or fir. Now, the embers are to a Russian stove of the greatest importance, for it is from the embers, and not from the flame, that the stove is expected to derive its heat. So long as the wood continues in a blaze, whatever quantity may have been put in, the stove never gets thoroughly warm; it is only when by means of the *yushka*, (a small plate of

iron,) the passage from the stove into the chimney has been hermetically closed, that the heat begins to be sensibly felt in the room. The Russian stove-heaters are extremely dexterous in all the details of their occupation. Tongues and shovels are unknown to them. Their only instrument is a long iron poker with a hook at the end of it. With this they keep stirring up the fiery mass, break up the embers, and pull forward the fragments of wood that are still burning, in order, by exposing them to the current of air, to accelerate their conversion. In every great house there is at least one servant whose exclusive duty it is to look after the stoves, and to collect and prepare the requisite fuel. In order that the family may have a warm room to take their coffee in, in the morning, it is necessary that the stove-heater should begin his labours at an early hour of the night. In general he builds up a pile of logs within each stove the evening before, that the wood may be well dried, and then he sets fire to it early in the morning. The stoves usually open upon long passages, which are thus as effectually heated as the rooms themselves.

If the *yushka* be closed before the wood be completely burnt into embers, a poisonous gas is emitted by the coals, and fatal consequences may ensue to those who are exposed to its influence. Such accidents do occasionally happen, and it is nothing uncommon in St. Petersburg to hear of people who have been suffocated by the fumes of their stoves; but when the immense number of those stoves is taken into consideration, and that every floor and every part of the house have to be warmed for at least six months of the year, it must be admitted that accidents occur but rarely, and that the stove-heaters must display an admirable degree of judgment in thus always selecting the right moment for closing the *yushka*. In autumn the houses are usually damp, and in consequence cool, but in December or January, after the stoves have all been in play for some months, every corner of a Russian house becomes thoroughly dry, and then behind the double windows and the threefold doors, there prevails throughout the day an equable, agreeable, and mild temperature of from 14° to 15°.

The erecting of one of these Russian stoves is a work of art, to which it is not every man who is equal. Much consideration and no little judgment are required in suiting the locality of the stove to the distribution of the apartments. The most distinguished artists in this line are almost invariably natives of what is called Great Russia, and throughout the empire it is to them almost exclusively that an office is assigned of such importance in a Russian establishment.

In every Russian house the stove plays an important part, particularly so in the houses of the poor. There the stove is often of extraordinary dimensions, and serves for cooking and baking food, as well as for warming the room. Round it are placed benches, where at their leisure the inmates may enjoy the luxury of increased heat, for to these denizens of the north the imbibing of caloric is among the highest of enjoyments. In the stove itself, a variety of niches and indentations are made, where various articles are laid to dry, and wet stockings and linen are constantly hanging about it. On the platform, at the top, lie beds, on which, wrapped up in their sheepskin cloaks, the inmates often abandon themselves to the twofold luxury of idleness and perspiration.

The Russian stoves, after all, however, are the most unpoetical, if not the least comfortable, of all the means by which human ingenuity has



contrived to generate an artificial heat. The Spanish *brasero*, the Italian *cammino*, the English fireside, and the half-open German stove, that affords at least a peep at the active minister within, all these form attractive centres, round which humanity congregates, and around which social converse is generated, and an interchange of ideas promoted, while the agreeable warmth of the flame is enjoyed. A Russian stove, on the contrary, is a mute, sulky-looking companion, whose enormous size makes it difficult ever to give him a graceful exterior. In general, the stove is a large, clumsy, oblong mass, that rises nearly to the ceiling of the room, to which it is a disfigurement rather than a decoration. In the houses of the rich, therefore, the stove is concealed, as much as possible, by mirrors and other articles of furniture, or is made wholly invisible by being constructed within the partition wall.

The double windows, which are often found even in the houses of the poorest peasants, contribute greatly to the warmth of Russian houses. As early as October the house may be said to go into winter quarters. Double windows are affixed to every room; every aperture through which a little air might find its way is carefully covered, and slips of paper are pasted over the edges of all the windows. Here and there a window is so constructed that a single pane may now and then be opened to let in a little air. In this close and confined atmosphere the family live and have their being, till the returning May ushers in the first fine weather, and gives the signal that fresh air may again be permitted to circulate through the interior of the mansion.

In the intermediate space formed by the double windows, it is customary to place sand or salt, either of which, by absorbing moisture, is supposed to increase the warmth. The salt is piled up in a variety of fanciful forms, and the sand is usually formed into a kind of garden decorated with artificial flowers. These bloom and blossom through the winter in their glassy cases, and as in these arrangements every family displays its own little fancies and designs, it may afford amusement, to those who are not above being amused by trifles, to walk the streets on a fine winter-morning, and admire the infinite variety of decorations presented by the double windows.

Quite as much care is expended upon the doors as upon the windows. It is a common thing to pass, not merely two, but three doors, before you enter the warmed passage of a house; and this is the case, not only in private houses, but also in public buildings, such as theatres, churches, &c.

The poor suffer far less from cold in St. Petersburg than in cities under a milder heaven. In different parts of the town there are large rooms, which are constantly kept warm, and to which every one has at all times free access. In front of the theatres, large fires are kept burning for the benefit of coachmen and servants; but the furs and warm apparel in which even beggars are sure to be clad, and the air-and-water-tight construction of their houses, are the chief security of all classes against the severity of their climate. As soon as the thermometer falls to  $-25^{\circ}$ , the sentinels all receive fur cloaks, in which they look grotesque enough, when marching up and down in front of the palaces. With all these precautions, however, the intense cold that sometimes prevails for weeks together, converts many a specimen of living humanity into a senseless statue of ice. This

is owing more to the manners of the people than to the want of suitable protection; to drunkenness and idleness among the poor, and to hard-heartedness, or more properly to inconsiderateness, among the rich.

The Russians, with all their liveliness of character, are by no means fond of any kind of exertion; and all gymnastics, whether mental or bodily, are odious to them. In cold weather they creep behind the stove, or bury themselves in furs, instead of battling against the frost with their arms and legs, as those of any other nation would do. The *butshnik* creeps into his wooden house; the soldier, if he dare, into his sentry-box; and the *isvoshtshik* rolls himself up into a sort of tangled ball, under the mats of his sledge. In these positions many of them are surprised by sleep, and fall victims to the frost. The sentinel is found an inanimate statue in his box, the *butshnik* is drawn forth a mere mummy, and the poor driver is taken a petrified cripple from his sledge. The immoderate use of spirits in which the lower people indulge very much augments the danger. The great majority of those who are frozen to death are the victims of intoxication. A severe frost never sets in, in St. Petersburg, without finding a number of drunken men sleeping in the streets; and sleep on such an occasion is the usual stage of transition to death. The inconsiderate conduct of the rich towards their servants is another and a frequent cause of death. It is incredible how much the poor coachmen, footmen, and postilions, are expected to endure. People will often go to the theatre or to a party, and leave their equipages in the street the whole evening, that they may be able to command their services at a moment's notice. The coachman then finds it difficult to resist the inclination to sleep; and the little twelve-year-old postilions, not yet accustomed to watch till midnight, hang slumbering on their horses, or, winding the reins round their arms, slip down and lie cowering on the frozen snow. Many a poor coachman has thus lost his nose, or has had his hands and feet disabled, while his master was feasting his palate or his ears, or indulging a voluptuous sympathy for fictitious sorrow. Fortunately for the Russian serf, the freezing to death is one of the easiest and least painful deaths which he is ever likely to suffer. Nay, some say that the sensation which accompanies it is not without some degree of enjoyment, and those who are roused from the slumber which in these cases usually precedes death, seldom show at first any thankfulness to those who have disturbed them in their passage to another world.

Extreme cold is usually accompanied by cheerful and quiet weather, so that the magnificent city of St. Petersburg rarely appears to greater advantage than when the thermometer stands at 30° below Reaumur's zero (35 below Fahrenheit's), when the sun shines brilliantly in a clear sky, while its rays are reflected by millions of icy crystals. From houses and churches dense columns of smoke slowly ascend. The snow and ice in the streets and on the Neva are white and clean, and the whole city seems clothed in the garments of innocence. Water becomes ice almost in the act of being poured upon the ground. Every one in the streets appears to be running for his life, and indeed is literally doing so, for it is only by running that he can hope to keep life in him. The trodden snow crackles and murmurs forth the strangest melodies, and every sound seems to be modified by the influence of the atmosphere.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE MARKETS.

THE Russians have a custom very agreeable to one desirous of buying, namely, the custom of offering for sale within the same building almost every thing that is likely to be bought. A stranger need not, therefore, inquire where this or that article is to be found; all he has to do, in general, is to go to one of the great markets or bazaars, and he will seldom fail to find the article he is in search of. Provisions are, of course, excepted, for which there are distinct markets.

The great bazaars of a Russian town, where all the most important articles of commerce are united, are called *gostinnoye dvorui*. They are mostly large buildings, consisting of a ground floor and an upper floor. The upper floor is generally reserved for wholesale dealings; the ground floor consists of a multitude of booths or shops in which the various descriptions of merchandise are sold by retail. The dwellings of the merchants are away from these markets; and when the business hours are at an end, each merchant locks up his own stall, and commits the whole building for the night to the guardianship of watchmen and dogs.

In every Russian city of any importance there is sure to be one such *gostinnoi dvor*, the extent of which may afford the travelling student in statistics a very fair standard by which to measure the commercial activity of the place. Even in the German cities of the Baltic provinces, as in Mittau, Dorpat, &c., the Russians have established such *gostinnoye dvorui*, and it is only in the maritime cities, as in Odessa, Riga, Libau, &c., that they are not yet to be found.

Nowhere do the *pares* congregate more with the *paribus* than in Russia. Not only are the merchants thus collected together under one roof, but the community thus formed is again split up into a variety of fractions, those who deal in similar articles keeping closely together. This holding of like to like seems almost innate with the Russians, for those articles which, on account of their bulky nature, are excluded from the *gostinnoi dvor*, such as ironware, firewood, furniture, &c., have each of them separate markets of their own, which are known by the generic term of *rādi*. It is the same with the *ruinoks*, or provision markets, of which there are distinct ones for meat, for fish, for hay, for eggs, and so on.

The *gostinnoi dvor* will be found, for the most part, to occupy a very central position in a Russian city, while the secondary markets are removed towards the outskirts. The *gostinnoi dvor* it must, however, be borne in mind, offers for sale only articles of domestic or of Asiatic production. The fabrics of western Europe seldom find a place there, but are usually retailed in shops situated in the most frequented streets. In the great provincial cities, the private shops are completely eclipsed by the *gostinnoi dvor*; but not so in the comparatively Europeanised St. Petersburg, though even there, the goods displayed in the principal market far exceed, both in quantity and in value, those that will be found in all the private shops put together.

The colossal building of which we have been speaking has one side in the Nevskoi Prospekt, and another in the Bolkhaia Sadovaia, or Great

Garden-street, through which, and some of the adjoining streets, it extends a number of ramifications of shops and booths, giving to that part of the town, throughout the year, the appearance of a perpetual fair. The better descriptions of Russian goods will all be found in the Gostinnoi Dvor; those of inferior value in the adjoining markets, the Apraxin Ruinok and the Tshukin Dvor, which lie a little farther on in the Bolkhaia Sadovaia. Following the last named street, which is bordered throughout its whole length by shops and booths, we at last arrive at an open place, the Sennaia Ploshtshod or hay place, which may be considered the principal provision market of St. Petersburg.

In the same way, in passing along the Prospekt, shops and booths present themselves in a constant succession to our view. When we have passed the silver shops we come to the dealers in fruit, then to the iron vaults; these are followed by the carriage magazines, the depots for wood and coals, the furniture dealers, and so on, till in the vicinity of the Nevski monastery we arrive at the Simnaia Ploshtshod or winter market, with its endless store of sledges and waggons. In the same quarter are also the horse market and the cattle market. There are a few markets in other quarters, such as the Krugloi Ruinok or round market, but these are comparatively of little importance.

The gostinnoi dvor is well deserving of a stranger's attention, not merely on account of the various goods offered for sale, many of them of a kind unknown to other parts of Europe, but also on account of the mixed crowd constantly moving about, and of the characteristic civility of the dealers, and their unwearied endeavours to overreach their customers. All these things make this quarter of St. Petersburg one of the most amusing and instructive lounges for a stranger desirous to study the character of the people and their city.

All the lanes and alleys that intersect the gostinnoi dvor are deluged throughout the day by a stream of sledges and droshkies, in which the cooks, the stewards, and the other servants of the great houses, come to make their daily purchases. In a city containing half a million of inhabitants, there must at all times be a great and urgent demand for a vast variety of articles, but there are many reasons why this should be more the case in St. Petersburg than in any other capital. In the first place, there is no other European capital where the inhabitants are content to make use of goods of such inferior quality, or where consequently they have such frequent occasion to buy new articles, or to have the old ones repaired. Then there is no other capital where the people are so capricious and so fond of change. The wealthy Russians are here one day, and gone the next; now travelling for the benefit of their health, now repairing to the country, to re-establish their finances by a temporary retirement, and then reappearing on the banks of the Neva, to put their hundreds of thousands into circulation. This constant fluctuation leads daily to the dissolution and to the formation of a number of establishments, and makes it necessary that there should be at all times a greater stock of all things necessary to the outfit of a family, than would be requisite in a town of equal extent, but of a more stable population.

A Russian seldom buys any thing till just when he wants to use it, and as he cannot then wait, he must have it ready to his hand. Boots, saddlery,



wearing-apparel, confectionery, and other articles, which with us are generally ordered beforehand from a tradesman, are here bought ready for immediate use. Each article has its separate row of shops, and the multitude of these rows is so gréat, that a stranger may often be heard to inquire, "My little father, where is the row of fur booths?" "My little mother, where is the cap row?" "Pray show me the stocking row?" "My little father, tell me the way to the petticoat row."

If the throng of buyers is calculated to amuse a stranger, he will be likely to find still more diversion, as he lounges along the corridors, in observing the characteristic manners of the merchants. These *gostinnoi dvor* merchants are almost invariably flaxen haired, brown bearded, shrewd fellows, in blue caftans, and blue cloth caps, the costumes uniformly worn by merchants throughout Russia. They are constantly extolling their wares in the most exaggerated terms to those who are passing by. "What is your pleasure, sir? Clothes? I have them here; the very best, and all of the newest fashion."—"Here are hats of the first quality, and by the best makers." "Kasan boots of the choicest description! *isvoltye, isvoltye!*"—"Shto vam ugodno 'ss? (what would suit you?) a bear-skin, a fox-skin, or a cloak of wolf-skin? You will find every tiling here; pray, walk in." Cap in hand, they are always ready to open their doors to every passer by, and are incessant in the exercise of their eloquence, whatever may be the rank, station, or age of those they address. They will not hesitate to offer a bear-skin mantle to a little fellow scarcely strong enough to carry it, recommend their coarsely fashioned boots to a passing dandy, invite an old man to purchase a child's toy, or solicit a young girl to carry away a sword or a fowlingpiece. Where the merchant does not act as his own crier, he usually entertains somebody to officiate in his place, and it may easily be imagined what life and animation these constant cries and solicitations must give to the whole market. Preachers and actors have generally a tone peculiar to their several classes, and even so has the *gostinnoi dvor* merchant, whose voice may be known afar off, but who immediately alters that tone when a fish shows a disposition to fasten on the bait, for then commences a more serious discussion of the merits and quality of his merchandise.

No light or fire is allowed in the building, unless it be the sacred lamps that are kept burning before the pictures of the saints, and which are supposed to be too holy to occasion any danger. The merchants are, in consequence, often exposed to intense cold, but this they endure with admirable fortitude and cheerfulness. Over their caftans, it is true, they put on a close fur coat of white wolf-skin, a piece of apparel worn by every *gostinnoi dvor* merchant, of the same cut and material.

Even without including the peasants who offer provisions for sale, there are probably not much less than 10,000 merchants and dealers of different degrees assembled in the *gostinnoi dvor* of St. Petersburg, and its dependent buildings. Of these people, few have their household establishments in the vicinity of the market, yet all have the wants of hunger to satisfy in the course of the day, and it may therefore be easily imagined, that a host of serviceable traders have attached themselves to the establishment for the mere convenience of the merchants. Among the streets and lanes of the bazaar there are constantly circulating, retailers of tea with their large steaming copper urns; quass sellers; together with dealers in bread

sausages, cheese, &c.; and all these people receive constant encouragement from the ever hungry *kupsni*. Careworn looks are as little seen in this market, as grumbling tones are heard; for a Russian seldom gives houseroom to care or melancholy, and yet more rarely gives utterance to a complaint. Nor indeed has he occasion; for in this rising country, *Slava Bogu!* (God be thanked!) be the merchandize ever so bad, trade goes on nevertheless. In other countries, a merchant relies upon the goodness of his merchandize for custom; the Russian speculator, I firmly believe, calculates that the worse his wares, the sooner will his customers want to renew their stock.

The Russian is by nature a light-hearted creature, and by no means given to reflection. You will seldom see the *gostinnoi dvor* merchant engaged with writings or calculations. If not occupied by a customer, or busy in his endeavours to attract one, you will mostly find him romping, playing, or jesting with his brother traders. In fine weather, draughts is their favourite game; and for greater convenience, the chequered field is often painted on the tables or benches that stand before their booths. They eagerly thrust their heads together, examine the position of the pieces with the air of connoisseurs, bet on one player or the other, and seem completely absorbed in the game, until a purchaser makes his appearance, when the group is broken up in a moment, and each endeavours, with an infinity of bowings and assurances, to gain for his own shop the honour of the stranger's custom. In winter, they often warm themselves in the roomy passages of the bazaar, with a game at football, or crowd together round the steaming *samovar*, and sip down cans full of hot tea. Sometimes they amuse themselves with their nightingales and other singing birds, of which they have always a great number about them; and sometimes—well, sometimes they fold their caftans leisurely about them, stretch forth their arms, and indulge themselves in—a yawn; but they never neglect, every now and then, to step before their *Bog*, or saint, and, with a devout inclination of the body, to pray to him for success in trade.

With the exception of furs, many of which are of excellent quality, there are in the *gostinnoi dvor*, properly so called, few but the iron and wax shops where the articles are thoroughly Russian. Most of the merchandise consists of bad imitations of foreign fabrics. As the goods, so the customers. Both are Europeanised, for there is little in the Frenchified soubrettes, the lackies in livery, the *employés* in uniform, and the foreign teachers, to remind one of Russian nationality; but a little farther on, when you enter the gates of the Apraxin Ruinock and the Tshukin Dvor, you come to bazaars where sellers, buyers, and wares are all equally and entirely Russian; and here, in the very centre of the palaces and plate glass of St. Petersburg, in this capital of princes and magnates, there unfolds itself to your view, a motley dirty populace, precisely similar to what may be supposed to have thronged the fairs of Novgorod in the middle ages, or may still be seen in the bazaars of any of the provincial cities of Russia.

The population of St. Petersburg, from the highest to the lowest, is constantly changing. The stationary portion is by far the least numerous, the majority look upon the city only as a temporary residence. The nobles are ever coming and going; foreigners hope to enrich themselves that they

may return to their native countries; the garrison, and all attached to it, must always be prepared to change their quarters; the civil servants of the government seldom remain long at one post, but are liable at a few days' notice to be ordered off to the most remote provinces; and the lower classes, such as servants, mechanics, and labourers, are, for the most part, serfs, who have received only a temporary leave of absence, at the expiration of which they are expected to return to the estates to which they belong. Even the *isvoshtshiks* in the streets are a nomadic race, plying for custom this year in St. Petersburg, the next in Moscow, and the succeeding one perhaps in Odessa or Astrakhan. St. Petersburg, in fact, like most Russian cities, is a place of rendezvous, where men congregate for a time; but not like our German cities, a home in which families attach themselves like ivy to the stone walls, and vegetate away for centuries. The mass of the population of St. Petersburg undergoes a complete change in less than ten years; and to this constant fluctuation I attribute the vast extent of the rag-fair, and the astonishing quantity of old furniture and old clothes, which are sold at a low price by those who take their departure, and disposed of again at a handsome profit to the newly arrived.

Thousands enter the city daily, without knowing whether on the morrow they shall become cooks or carpenters, masons or musicians, or whether, on stripping off their village dress, they shall assume the livery of a lackey, or the caftan of a merchant. For all their wants, the Apraxin Ruinok and the Tshukin Dvor are prepared. Nay, should a Samoyede from Siberia, or a Huron from America, come naked into these ruinoks, he may leave them again in a few minutes, provided with every imaginable article necessary to equip him as a civilised Russian; for ill as sounds the name of *voshevoi ruinok*, which in St. Petersburg is generally given to these markets, and which I will not here translate to my readers, lest they should conceive an unfair prejudice against the place, still it would be a great mistake to suppose that nothing but what was old and ragged was here exposed for sale.

These two markets occupy a piece of ground about 1500 feet square, containing, therefore, a surface of rather more than two millions of square feet. The whole is so closely covered with stalls and booths, that nothing but narrow lanes are left between; and supposing each booth, including the portion of lane in front of it, to occupy 500 square feet, which is certainly making a very liberal allowance, it would follow that there must be within the two bazaars nearly 5000 booths, tents, and stalls. These form a city of themselves. The tops of the booths frequently project and meet those that are opposite to them, making the little lanes between as dark as the alleys of the Jews' quarters in some of our old German towns, or like the streets of many an oriental city at the present day. Through narrow gates you pass from the busy Garden-street into this gloomy throng, where a well-dressed human being might be looked for in vain; where all are "black people;" all bearded, furred, and thoroughly un-European.

Under the gateways are suspended large lamps and gaudy pictures of saints, and these present themselves anew at every corner as you proceed through the lanes of the market. Here and there you come to an open space in which a little chapel has been erected, and so gaily fitted up, you would fancy a Chinese pagoda had served for the model. All this, however, is insufficient to content the piety of the Russians, who often build a



wooden bridge between two opposite booths, for the convenience of suspending a few additional lamps and saints. By the side of the chapel there is seldom wanting that other building which, next to the chapel, is the most indispensable to a Russian, namely, the *kaback* or brandy-shop, which is often very gaily decorated, and where spirits, beer, and quass, may constantly be had.

"Slip your arms into your fur sleeves, and button your beaver collar close about your ears," said my companion to me, the first time I ventured into the ruinok, for I had allowed those articles of my wardrobe to hang loosely behind, as is the usual custom in Russia. "We are here," he continued, "in the thieves' quarter of St. Petersburg, and every thing that is left loose is considered a fair prize. Put your rings into your pocket, for there are those who would cut off your finger for the sake of the gold; and if it was known where you carried your pocket-book, you would have a hole in your cloak immediately." Indeed common fame says that people have sometimes been strangely clipped and cut by the hordes that occupy these wild regions; but as far as I am concerned, I am bound to say that nothing of the kind ever happened to me, though I have often enough, and carelessly enough, wandered through the mazes of this great labyrinth of a fair.

Here also, in the true Russian spirit, like has paired with like. In one corner, for instance, all the dealers in sacred images have congregated. The Russians, who believe themselves abandoned by God and all good angels; as soon as they are without His visible and tangible presence, or, rather, who think every place the Devil's own ground, until the priest has driven him out of it, and who, therefore, decorate their bodies, their rooms, their doors, and their gates, as well as their churches, with sacred images, require, of course, a very large and constant supply of the article, of which, in fact, the consumption is enormous. The little brass crosses, and the Virgins, the St. Johns, the St. Georges, and other amulets, may be seen piled up in boxes like gingerbread nuts at a fair. On the walls of the booths are hung up pictures of all sorts and sizes, radiant with mock gold and silver. Some are only a few inches in length and breadth. Of these a nobleman's footman will buy a few score at a time, as necessary to the fitting up of a new house; for in every room a few of these holy little articles must be nailed up against the wall. For village churches, for private chapels, and for devout merchants of the old faith, there are pictures of several ells square, before which a whole household may prostrate themselves at their ease. Some are neatly set in mahogany-frames of modern fashion, others are still adorned in the good old style with pillars, doors, and temples of silver wire; some are new, and from the pencils of students of the newly-established St. Petersburg Academy of Arts, but the greater part are old, and present figures often nearly obliterated by the dust and smoke of centuries. To these it is, particularly when they can be warranted to have once adorned the wall of a church, that the lower orders in Russia attach the greatest value, just as our German peasants prefer an old, dirty, well-thumbed hymn-book, to one just fresh from the binder's.

In another part of the market will be found a whole quarter of fruit-shops, in which an incredible quantity of dried fruit is offered for sale. Each of these shops is as oddly decorated as its fellows. In the centre, on an elevated pedestal, there stands generally a rich battery of bottles



and boxes of conserves, mostly manufactured at Kieff. Round the walls, in small boxes, the currants, raisins, almonds, figs, and oranges are arranged, while huge sacks and chests of prunes, nuts, and juniper-berries, retire more modestly into corners; and large tuns full of *glukvi*, a small red berry of which the Russians are passionately fond, stand sentinels at the door. These are mostly sold in winter, when they are generally frozen to the consistency of flint stones, and are measured out with wooden shovels to amateurs. Inside and outside, these shops are decorated with large festoons of mushrooms, at all times a favourite dish with the common people in Russia. I am surprised that no good artist should ever have chosen one of these picturesque Russian fruit-shops for the subject of his pencil. Such a booth, with its bearded dealers and its no less bearded customers, would make an admirable *tableau de genre*; but the painters of St. Petersburg, I suppose, find it more profitable to cover their canvass with one insipid set of features after another, and to expend all the gorgeousness of their colouring on the uniforms and diamonds of the upper strata of society.

Go on a little farther, and you come to whole rows of shops full of pretty bridal ornaments; gay metal wedding-crowns, such as it is customary during the ceremony to place upon the heads of bride and bridegroom, and artificial wreaths and flowers, of a very neat fabric, and all at very reasonable prices. A whole garland of roses, for instance, tastefully interwoven with silver wire, at 80 copeks, or little more than sixpence. A bride might here be handsomely decorated from head to foot for a few shillings; and as among the humbler classes of St. Petersburg, some thirty weddings are daily solemnized, without speaking of other festive celebrations, it may easily be conceived what piles of ornaments of various kinds are constantly kept on hand to supply the wants of brides and bridesmaids, birthday guests, and the like.

Whole groups of shops are filled with perfumes, incense, and various articles for fumigation. Others with honey from Kasan and Tulo, neatly laid out in wooden vessels, some as clean as the milk pans in the caves of Homer's Cyclops, while others, of a less attractive look, remind one rather of Limburg cheese in an advanced state of decay.

However perilous in this market may be the condition of finger-rings, and the pendant articles of a visiter's costume, the ducats and silver rubles on the tables of the money-changers must enjoy a tolerable security, for these tables are seen at every corner, with the different descriptions of coin set forth in tempting little piles, while throngs are passing to and fro, among whom, one would suppose, a few knaves might easily gratify their *amor nummi* by a sudden scramble, with a very fair prospect of escaping immediately afterwards in the crowded avenues of the market. An apparently accidental push, and all the rich garniture of the table would lie scattered in the dirt; and while all were busy in assisting the banker in the recovery of his capital, who would be able to point out the dexterous thief who had appropriated a few rubles to his private use? Yet these money changers must feel secure in their avocation, or one would hardly see tables, with thousands of rubles upon them, committed to the care of boys scarcely twelve years old. The Russian rogue will pass off the worst merchandise at the highest price with an unscathed conscience; nor will he hesitate, if opportunity serve, to transfer another's purse to his own pocket; but the tables of these money-changers seem to stand under

the ægis of the public. I have myself seen a table accidentally overthrown by the pressure of the crowd, when the sheepskin multitude around joined in aiding the juvenile banker to re-collect his scattered treasure, and all the gold and silver and copper coins were carefully picked up, till not a copek was missing.

The pastrycooks also have their quarter in this market, where they vend the oily fish pirogas, of which the bearded Russians are so passionately fond. Here little benches are ranged around the table on which are placed the dainty delicacies, covered with oily pieces of canvass, for the piroga to be properly enjoyed must be eaten warm. A large pot of green oil and a salt-stand of no ordinary size, are the indispensable accompaniments to the feast. Pass one of these shops, and throw an accidental glance at his wares, and the merchant will be sure to anticipate your desires; quickly he will plunge his tempting cake into the oil pot, scatter a pinch of salt upon the dripping mass, and present it to you with the air of a prince. The sheepskinned bearded Muscovite will rarely be able to resist the temptation; he will seat himself on one of the benches, and one rich savoury piroga after the other will wend its way down his throat, till his long and well anointed beard becomes as bright and glossy as a piece of highly-polished ebony. Some of my readers may turn with disgust from the picture here presented to them, but, for my own part, I was always too much amused by the wit and *politesse* of these oil-lickers, to expend much indignation on their repulsive wares. Even the coarsest and dirtiest article of merchandise will be presented with a courtly and insinuating demeanour by these rough-looking bearded fellows; even a greasy piroga, dripping with green oil, will be accompanied by a neatly turned compliment or a lively jest, and the few copeks paid for it will be sure to be received with expressions of the warmest thankfulness.

Every article almost in the Tolkutshi Ruinok may be described as cheap and nasty, and yet what vistas of yet worse and worse wares unfold themselves as you wander on to the outskirts of the market, where disbanded apparel and invalided furniture are exposed for sale. Things may be seen there, of which it is difficult to imagine that they can still retain a money value. Rags, bits of ribbon, fragments of paper, and broken glass; clothes that the poorest *isvoshtshik* has dismissed from his service, and petticoats that the humblest housemaid has thought herself bound to lay aside. Yet all these things, and others, which a *gostinnoi dvor* merchant would scarcely use except to warm his stove, are not arranged without some show of taste and elegance, nor are they offered without a multitude of civil speeches and lofty panegyrics to the barefooted beggar, to the gipsy and Jewess, who timidly hover around the rich repositories, and cast many a longing glance at the many things with which they might cover their nakedness or decorate their huts, but the possession of which they are unable to purchase with the copper coin within their grasp. The crumbs swept from the tables of the rich are here gathered together; and though the joint stock of many of these shops be not worth one of the blue notes staked at a card-table in the salon of a noble, yet each article has its estimated value, below which it will not be parted with,—no not for one quarter of a copek.

Perhaps for a stranger, the most interesting portion of this world of markets, is that of the Tshukin Dvor, where the birds are sold. Two long rows of booths are full of living specimens of ornithology: pigeons, fowls, geese,

ducks, swans, larks, bulfinches, siskins, and hundreds of other singing birds are there collected, and form the most picturesque and variegated menageries that can be imagined. Each booth is of wood, and open in the front, so that the whole of its contents may be seen at once by the passing stranger, who is saluted with such a concert of cackling, crowing, chattering, cooing, piping, and warbling, as would suffice to furnish the requisite supply of idyllic melodies for a hundred villages. Between the opposite booths are usually such bridges as I have already described, from which the pictures of saints are suspended, for the edification of the devout. On these bridges, and on the roofs of the booths, whole swarms of pigeons are constantly fluttering about, the peaceful Russian being a great lover of this gentle bird. Each swarm knows its own roof, and the birds allow themselves to be caught without much difficulty, when a bargain is about to be concluded. The pigeon is never eaten by a Russian, who would hold it a sin to harm an animal, in whose form the Holy Ghost is said to have manifested itself. Pigeons are bought, therefore, only as pets, to be fed and schooled by their masters. It is curious to see a Russian merchant directing the flight of his docile scholars. With a little flag fastened to a long staff he conveys his signals to them, makes them at his will rise higher in the air, fly to the right or left, or drop to the ground as if struck by a bullet from a rifle.

The poor little singing birds,—the larks, nightingales, linnets, bulfinches, &c.,—must be of a hardier race than in more southern lands; for in spite of the bitter frost, they chirrup away merrily, and salute with their songs every straggling ray of sunshine that finds its way into their gloomy abodes. The little creatures receive during the whole long winter not one drop of water, for it would be useless to offer them what a moment afterwards would be converted into a petrified mass. Their little troughs are accordingly filled only with snow, which they must liquify in their own beaks when they wish to assuage their thirst.

Moscow is famed for its cocks, and here the Moscow cock may be seen proudly stalking about, in cages and out of them. The best pigeons are said to come from Novgorod, and Finland furnishes the chief supply of singing birds. Geese are brought even from the confines of China, to be sold as rarities in the Tshukin Dvor, after a journey of more than 4000 miles. Grey squirrels may be seen rolling about in their cages like incarnate quicksilver; while rabbits and guinea-pigs without number gambol their time away in their little wooden hutches. Within the booth, a living centre of all this living merchandise, behold the merchant, closely ensconced in his wolf-skin, and ready to dispose of his little feathered serfs at any acceptable price. At the back of the booth, be sure, there hangs a saintly picture of some sort, its little lamp shedding a cheerful light to guard the feathered crowd against the evil influence of intruding demons; but there are evil spirits that the good saint cannot banish. Man is there, to hold in chains or to sentence to death, according as it may suit his calculations of profit, or the caprices of his palate. On shelves around are ranged the trophies of his murderous tube, and the northern swans, the heathcocks (*reptshiki*), and the snow-white partridges (*kurapatki*), are piled up under the very cages from which the captive larks warble their liquid notes.

It is astonishing what a quantity of these birds are yearly consumed at the luxurious tables of St. Petersburg. In winter the cold keeps the meat

fresh, and at the same time facilitates its conveyance to market. The partridges come mostly from Saratoff, the swans from Finland; Livonia and Esthonia supply heath-cocks and grouse, and the wide steppes must furnish the trapp geese which flutter over their endless plains, where the Cossack hunts them on horseback, and kills them with his formidable whip. All these birds, as soon as the life-blood has flown, are converted into stone by the frost, and, packed up in huge chests, are sent for sale to the capital. Whole sledge-loads of snow-white hares find their way to the market. The little animals are usually frozen in a running position, with their ears pointed, and their legs stretched out before and behind, and, when placed on the ground, look, at the first glance, as if they were in the act of escaping from the hunter. Bear's flesh also is sometimes offered for sale in this market, and here and there may be seen a frozen reindeer lying in the snow by the side of a booth, its hairy snout stretched forth upon the ground, its knees doubled up under its body, and its antlers rising majestically into the air. It looks as if, on our approaching it, it would spring up, and dash away once more in search of its native forests. The mighty elk, likewise, is no rare guest in this market, where it patiently presents its antlers as a perch for the pigeons that are fluttering about, till, little by little, the axe and the saw have left no fragment of the stately animal, but every part of it has gone its way into the kitchens of the wealthy.

Similar markets for birds and game will be found in every large Russian city. Indeed the habits and fashions of the Russian markets are completely national. Those of Moscow vary but little from those of Tobolsk; and Irkhutsk, Odessa, and Archangel have shown themselves equally servile in their imitation of the metropolitan bazaars.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE BLACK PEOPLE.

FROM the Gostinnoi Dvor, as has already been said, the booths and stalls of the *merchants* are planted along the sides of the Sadovaïa, or Garden-street, to a considerable distance. After passing a row of toy-shops we come to the booksellers,—that is to say, to the venders of Russian literature; for the German and French booksellers, as dealers in foreign merchandise, have their locality in the Prospekt.

Next come the dealers in cloth, a seemingly interminable succession of booths, hung with all kinds of cloths and draperies, that the half darkness within may be less likely to betray the worthlessness of the merchant's wares.

Passing these, we arrive at some hardware and clock shops, though the latter have formed their chief lodgment in the *gostinnoi dvor*, where the clocks are marshalled on shelves, in due order and in long lines, from the treble of the shrill-toned dwarf to the capacious bulk and voluminous voice



of the double bass. "In long lines," I repeat it, for every thing with the Russians is long. Long are the lines of houses in their streets, long are the lines of their soldiers, long—oh, how long!—are their regiments of verst-posts (*anglice*, mile-stones); their buildings are long and drawn out; and long, very long, are their caravans of waggons on the road. Breadth, depth, and elevation, indeed, are wanting. Therefore it is that every thing among them is without substance or durability; nothing is close, compact, solid or exalted; every thing is long, flat, smooth; the whole country is stiff and sharp-cornered, and has the air of having passed through the hands of the drill-sergeant.

Last of all come the venders of wax candles, which are exhibited for sale in all forms and sizes. Some are thick enough to be placed as pillars in the facade of a temple, while others are almost as thin as spun silk. These are the merchants whose trade is, apparently, among the best in St. Petersburg. Their dealings augment in proportion as the Greek-Russian Church extends her dimensions. The nations that in later times have been baptized in the Russian name, all require a constant supply of wax, of which their new faith teaches them to burn away vast quantities for the good of their souls. The recent transition of the Lithuanian Church to the national faith; the numberless proselytes whom the Russians are constantly gaining over; the churches built and building in all the new colonies, in Siberia, in the steppes, and in the capital itself; all these lead to a constant demand for wax candles of the genuine ecclesiastical mould. The wax, mostly purified with great care, arrives at Moscow in cakes of two poods in weight. There it is bleached, for in St. Petersburg there are no wax bleachers, the Finnish sun being itself too well bleached to have much effect in bleaching anything else. The wax tapers themselves are often covered with ornaments. Some are gilt, others are spun round with gold and silver thread, and others again have small pieces of coloured glass let into them, to cheat the eye with the semblance of precious stones.

Having passed the wax lights, we arrive at the spacious hay market (Sennaïa Ploshtshod), with its stately church. This place is remarkable as the only spot in which a barricade was ever erected in St. Petersburg, in consequence of a popular insurrection. This was in 1832, when the cholera raged here, and when the mobility of the capital, who make the hay market their daily lounge, were seized with the notion that prevailed in so many other great cities of Europe, that not God but the doctors had brought the pestilence among them. The physicians were supposed to be poisoning the people; and these, excited by their own absurd suspicions, broke out one morning into open insurrection. The frantic mob of gray-beards ran wildly about the neighbouring streets, seized upon the cholera carts, made the patients get out, set the horses loose, and, after breaking the vehicles, threw the fragments into the Fontanka, and then fortified the market-place by erecting barricades of hay-waggons at the several entrances. The insurgents passed the night behind their intrenchments, resolved, on the following morning, to deal with the doctors as they had dealt with the carts. Early in the morning, accordingly, the great cholera hospital was attacked and taken by storm. The physicians, mostly Germans, were thrown from the windows and torn to pieces by the mob, and the patients were conveyed to their homes, that they might be freed from, the clutches of their supposed tormenters. Shortly afterwards the emperor arrived from Zarskoye Selo, and immediately repaired to the market in an

open carriage, unattended by any military escort. The barricades disappeared at his approach. His carriage drew up at the entrance of the church, where he prayed and crossed himself, and then addressed to the multitude a few words, which were duly chronicled at the time in most of the newspapers of Europe. He bade the people kneel down and pray to God to forgive them their sins; and all that lately so tumultuous multitude knelt down at the command of their sovereign, and unresistingly allowed the police to come among them, and quietly convey the ringleaders of the riot to prison.

Without pausing to comment on a scene so illustrative of the influence which the sovereign exercises over the minds of the Russian people, let us enter the market itself, and examine the unwashed throng, by which it is filled to such a degree that the police have some trouble to keep a passage clear in the centre for the equipages constantly coming and going. On one side of this passage stand the sellers of hay, wood, and, in spring, of plants and shrubs. On the other side are the peasants with their stores of meat, fish, butter and vegetables. Between these two rows are the sledges and equipages whose owners come to make the daily purchases, and depart laden with herbs and vegetables, the bleeding necks of the poultry often presenting a singular contrast to the brilliant carriages from whose windows they are listlessly dangling. Along the fronts of the houses, meanwhile, are arrayed the dealers in quass and pastry, together with the beer and tea stalls, at which the peasants never fail to expend a portion of their gain.

The stables of St. Petersburg contain seldom less than from 30,000 to 40,000 horses, without including those of the garrison. The animal wants of some 50,000 or 60,000 horses have therefore daily to be provided for, a larger number, probably, in proportion to its extent, than in any other European metropolis. The consumption of hay, accordingly, is enormous. In summer, whole fleets, laden with mountains of hay, come floating down the Neva; and in winter, caravans of hay sledges defile through the streets, and are drawn up in squadrons and regiments along the sides of the Sennaïa Ploshtshod. Some of the hay is sold wholesale by the load, but the greater part is spread out on the ground and made up into small parcels to suit the convenience of the *isvoshtshiks*. Poor women and children may constantly be seen hovering about, to pick up the few blades that lie scattered about, and as soon as they have collected their little harvest they run off to a neighbouring street, where they dispose of their gleanings to some loitering *isvoshtshik*, from whom in return they obtain the means of providing a mouthful for themselves.

The sledges, after bringing the various commodities to market, serve their owners as stalls and counters. The matting thrown aside allows the poultry and meat to be arranged in a picturesque manner to catch the eye of the passing stranger. The geese are cut up, and the heads, necks, legs, and carcasses sold separately, by the dozen or the half-dozen, strung ready for sale upon little cords. He whose finances will not allow him to think of luxuriating on the breast of a goose, may buy himself a little rosary of frozen heads, while one still poorer must content himself with a neck-lace, or a few dozen of webbed feet, to boil down into a Sunday soup for his little ones. The most singular spectacle is furnished by the frozen oxen, calves, and goats, which stand about in ghastly rows, and look like bleeding spectres come to haunt the carnivorous tyrants whose appetites have condemned the poor victims to a premature death. The petrified masses can

be cut up only with hatchets and saws. Sucking pigs are a favourite delicacy with the Russians. Hundreds of the little creatures, in their frozen condition, may be seen ranged about the sledges, with their tall motionless mothers by the side of them.

The anatomical dissections of a Russian butcher are extremely simple. Bones and meat having been all rendered equally hard by the frost, it would be difficult to attempt to separate the several joints. The animals are, accordingly, sawn up into a number of slices of an inch or two in thickness, and in the course of this operation a quantity of animal sawdust is scattered on the snow, whence it is eagerly gathered up by poor children, of whom great numbers haunt the market. Fish, which is offered for sale in the same hard condition, is cut up in a similar way. The little diminutive *snitki* are brought to market in sacks, and rattle like so many hazel nuts when thrown into the scale. The pikes, the salmon, and the sturgeon, so pliant and supple when alive, are now as hard as though they had been cut out of marble, and so they must be kept, for a sudden thaw would spoil them, and to guard against this, they are constantly encased in ice or snow. Sometimes the whole mass freezes together, and the hatchet must then be liberally applied before the piscatory petrifications can be liberated from their icy incrustations.

So long as the frost keeps all liquid matter in captivity, and so long as the snow, constantly renewed, throws a charitable covering over all the hidden sins of the place, so long the ploshtshod looks clean enough, but this very snow and frost prepare for the coming spring a spectacle which I would counsel no one to look upon, who wishes to keep his appetite in due order for the sumptuous banquets of St. Petersburg. Every kind of filth and garbage accumulates during the winter; and when at last the melting influence of spring dissolves the charm, the quantities of sheep's eyes, fish tails, crab shells, goat's hairs, fragments of meat, pools of blood, not to speak of hay, dung, and other matters, are positively frightful. One would almost imagine that another Hercules would be required to cleanse the Augean stable; nevertheless, the purveyors to the several kitchens are not deterred by the disgusting sight, but come to wander through the crowd, and lay in a supply for their daily wants, while the peasants eat their cakes and drink their quass, unmindful of the iniquities around them. Those only who have some acquaintance with the atrocious shambles of Vienna, can have any conception of the frozen, thawed, and refrozen specimens of meat which are constantly imposed upon the public in the Sennaia Ploshtshod.

Another of the markets in which the manners of the "lower orders" of St. Petersburg may be conveniently studied, is the Zimnaia Ploshtshod, at the end of the Nevskoi Prospekt, where the living cattle are disposed of, and where a quantity of sledges and country waggons are constantly offered for sale to the peasants. Thousands of specimens of the Russian *telega* may here be examined at leisure. It is a singular vehicle, and no description would convey any idea of its form and construction, without the accompaniment of some pictorial illustration. Its appearance is certainly graceful, and it may even be described as elegant, when compared to the peasant carts of many other parts of Europe. The Russian peasant's sledge is likewise a composition admirable for its lightness and its adaptation to the country.

The horses sold in this market are duly imbued with the national



character. Like their masters they are small, hut active and supple; with long manes and beards, ragged hair, delicate joints, and iron constitutions. In the stable they are dull and heavy, but in harness full of spirit, unwearied in the race, and even after the hardest labour tricky and playful. Cold, heat, hunger, and thirst, they endure with a patience truly admirable, and often receive their dirty straw with more apparent relish, than their German brethren do the golden corn. Yet after all, there is but little energy in the Russian horse. He knows not how to husband his force, and if unable to clear the hill at a gallop he remains hopelessly fixed in the mud. The Russian cannot be said to illtreat his horse. He rarely flies into a rage against his animal, and expends at all times far more words than blows upon it; on the other hand, however, he bestows but little care upon it, and spoils it as little with over cherishing as he is himself spoiled with kindness by those in whose school he has been trained and broken in. The weekly consumption of horses at St. Petersburg is calculated at about 200; some idea may therefore be formed of the throng and bustle that distinguish the monthly and half-yearly horse-fairs at the Zimnaïa Ploshtshod.

At the nones of December, however, the dead animals that arrive cause infinitely more bustle there than the "stamping steeds" of whom I have just spoken. On the 6th of December, namely, neither sooner nor later, but on the feast of St. Nicholas, it is generally assumed that the snow track must be in a firm and proper condition for the winter. Among the Russians indeed almost all actions, but particularly those which relate to their household arrangements, are regulated, not according to nature, but according to certain festivals of the church, which are assumed to be the most suitable periods for certain arrangements to be made. Thus, for instance, the cattle is not driven out into the fields when the grass is green, but on the 17th of April, St. Stephen's day, and then the ceremony is accompanied by the benedictions of the priest, and copious besprinklings with holy water. The farmer does not begin to plough when the weather is favourable, but on St. George's day. Apples are not plucked when they are ripe, but on the feast of Mary, in August; and an apple eaten before the legitimate day, would be thought little better than poison; while after that day, even an unripe apple would be given unhesitatingly to an infant. On the Tuesday after Easter, in the south of Russia, all the Tshumaks\* sally forth, because the roads then are considered to be good, and on the 1st of October (*Pakrovi*) all endeavour to be home again, as after that festival the country is no longer deemed passable.

On the 6th of December, accordingly, the snow track is thought to be in a fit condition for travelling. The autumn, with its rains, its storms, and its alternations of frost and thaw, is supposed to be at an end, and all the large caravans of sledges are put into motion on this important day. In the second week of December, therefore, St. Petersburg, after having perhaps been but scantily supplied during the latter part of the autumn, is all at once inundated with inconceivable masses of winter stores of every kind. A scene something like that which has been described as customary at the haymarket, takes place, but on an infinitely larger scale. The frozen oxen that stand about in all directions are not to be numbered.

\* Drivers of the oxen caravans.



The pigs are piled up in pyramids on the snow, and the heaps of goats and sheep rise to the altitude of mountains. The winter provision market at this time is a sight which no stranger ought to miss seeing.

We have thus passed in review the three principal markets where the Russian populace may be said chiefly to resort; let us now draw a little nearer, and examine more attentively, the life and manners of the class that people them, and, after all, constitute the bulk of the nation.

The aristocracy of every country have invented some contemptuous term, by which to designate the mass of their country people, whose rudeness and peculiarities it is always more easy to condemn, than it is to discover and duly estimate the qualities that are really valuable. The English expression *John Bull*, and the French word *canaille*, are examples of what I mean. Now the Russians, from the earliest times, for the word existed even in the days of the republic of Novgorod, have called their *canaille tshornoi narod*, which means literally, black people; but as *tshornoi* is often used synonymously with *dirty*, the expression may be taken to mean "dirty people;" in short, "the unwashed," and to this comprehensive class are considered to belong, the peasantry, particularly when they make their appearance in the towns, the street rabble, beggars, and the common labourers.—An individual belonging to the *tshornoi narod* is called a *mushik*.

The *tshornoi narod* varies in so many respects from the mob of other countries, and have so many good and bad qualities of their own, that they have furnished matter for comment and wonder to all travellers who have visited Russia during the last three centuries; and these peculiarities are the more deserving of attention inasmuch as they are often national rather than confined to a class. There are people who believe that the lower classes in Russia are a separate and oppressed caste, without a will of their own, and without influence over their superiors; and that the civilized class floats over the mass like oil over water, neither mingling or sympathizing with the other. Now this is the very reverse of the truth. There is perhaps no country in the world where all classes are so intimately connected with each other as in this vast empire, or so little divided into castes; and the same peculiarities which we notice in the bearded *mushik*, manifest themselves with only trifling modifications among the loftiest pinnacles of that Babylonian building, the social edifice of Russia. On the haymarket of St. Petersburg we may examine the raw material out of which all Russian classes have been manufactured for centuries: and a passing glance is enough to convince us that these bearded rusty fellows are of the same race as the polished and shaven *élégants* whom we meet with in the saloons. To some extent, there exists in every country, a certain affinity and family likeness between the highest and the lowest classes; but nowhere is this more the case than in Russia, because, contrary to the prevailing belief, in no country are the extremes of society brought into more frequent contact, and in few are the transitions from one class to another more frequent or more sudden. The peasant becomes a priest on the same day perhaps that an imperial mandate degrades the noble to a peasant, or to a Siberian colonist. Degradations to the ranks is a punishment frequently inflicted on Russian officers. Hereditary rank is disregarded, while public services often lead rapidly to the highest dignities. Even the *glebæ adscripti* are often more nomadic in their habits, and less rooted to their soil, than our free peasant in Germany; and

the spirit of speculation that pervades the whole nation, is constantly making rich men poor, and poor men rich.

It requires but little polishing to convert the raw material of the mushik into a shrewd trader; and expend but a little more pains upon his training, and he will chatter away in English, French, and German. He takes the polish easily, learns without much trouble to dance and dangle, and when you look at him closely, you find him a very Proteus, who glides at will into almost every form that he chooses to assume. On the hay-market we behold the same mob that in the middle ages at the sound of the Vetsha bell, poured into the forum of the mighty republic of Novgorod, the same mob that placed Boris Godunoff on the throne, tore from it the false Demetrius, and exalted the house of Romanoff, which rose to its present astonishing power, through the mighty fermentation and development of the tshornoi narod.

The common man of St. Petersburg has precisely the same characteristics as the common man of Moscow or Odessa, or as the labourer on the confines of China. All cling with the same fidelity to the customs of their ancestors, and all remain the same in manners, education, and tastes. Their food is the same throughout the whole of the vast empire, and centuries will probably pass away before any sensible change will occur. This circumstance gives to the Russian people a unity of character, which we should vainly look for in other countries, where the manners and habits of one province often present a striking contrast to those of another.

At the first glance there is certainly something extremely repulsive in the Russian mushik. His hair is long and shaggy, and so is his beard: his person is dirty; he is always noisy; and when wrapped up in his sheepskin, he certainly presents a figure more suitable for a bandit or murderer than for a man devoted to peaceable occupations. This apparent rudeness, however, is less a part of the man himself, than of his hair and beard, of his shaggy sheepskin, and the loud deep tone of his voice. The stranger who is able to address him with kindness in his native language, soon discovers in the mushik, a good-humoured, friendly, harmless and serviceable creature.—"*Sdrastvuiyte brat!* Good day, brother; how goes it?"—"*Sdrastvuiyte batiushka!* Good day, father; thank God, it goes well with me. What is your pleasure? How can I serve you?" And at these words his face unbends into a simpering smile, the hat is taken off, the glove drawn from the hand, bow follows bow, and he will catch your hand with native politeness and good-humoured cordiality. With admirable patience he will then afford the required information in its minutest details; and this the more willingly as he feels flattered by the interrogation, and is pleased by the opportunity to assume the office of instructor. A few words are often enough to draw from him a torrent of eloquence.

Englishmen are too apt to attribute the courtesy of the Russian to a slavish disposition, but the courteous manner in which two Russian peasants are sure to salute each other when they meet, cannot be the result of fear engendered by social tyranny. On the contrary, a spirit of genuine politeness pervades all classes, the highest as well as the lowest. Foreigners generally describe the Russians as rogues, with whom it is impossible to conclude a bargain without being cheated, and no one can deny that the frauds daily practised in the market places are innumerable. Nevertheless, examples are also numerous among them of the most romantic

acts of integrity. An instance of the kind came to my own knowledge. An English lady holding an appointment in the Winter Palace, gave 500 rubles to a poor *isdavoi*\* to deliver to her daughter at Zarskoye Selo. On the following day he returned, kissed the lady's hand, and said: "Pardon me, I am guilty. I cannot tell how it has happened, but I have lost your money, and cannot find it again. Deal with me as you please." The lady, unwilling to ruin the man, made no mention of his offence, and after a time lost sight of him entirely. At the end of six years he came to her one day with a cheerful countenance, and returned the 500 rubles of which his carelessness had deprived her. On inquiry it turned out that during those six years he had denied himself every little enjoyment, and had saved up his wages till he had collected about 300 rubles. Having recently been promoted to a better situation he had been in a condition to marry. His wife had brought him a dower of 100 rubles, and was besides possessed of some articles of trifling value, all of which had been sold in order to tranquillize the husband's conscience, who now came to relieve himself of a debt that had so long weighed upon his mind. No entreaty could induce him to take the money back, which was, however, placed in a public bank, to accumulate at compound interest for the benefit of his children.

Such instances of honesty are by no means rare amongst the Russians; whether at the last day they will balance their admitted rogueries, God alone can decide. The Russian way of cheating is quite peculiar to the people; they do it with so much adroitness, one may almost say with so much grace, that it is difficult to be angry with them. If a German cheats me, I cannot restrain my anger; he does it with the worst conscience in the world; he knows what he is about, has the most perfect consciousness of the shameless exorbitance of his demands, and basely abuses the confidence placed in him. The Russian on the contrary knows that every one takes him for a rogue, and in the vivacity of his fancy may really imagine that his wares are what he so loudly proclaims them *samolot shize* (the very best). Neither can he conceive why any one should object to pay four times any more than twice the value of a thing, and is therefore as unconcerned as a conjurer over his tricks. He laughs, jests, ogles his outwitted customer, and *bona-fide* thanks God and all his saints that his work has prospered so well. One may see when a German cheats, that he knows the devil is at his elbow; when a Russian does the same, he holds himself especially favoured by his good angel.

The case is much the same with their temperance as with their honesty. The nation is inclined to cheating from top to bottom, and yet people most pedantically honest may be found amongst them, and a hundred instances might be cited in which a Russian rogue would be more punctiliously honourable than a German *Herrnhuter*; the whole nation is most undeniably voluptuous and addicted to intemperance, and yet affords examples, not only of exemplary sobriety, but there are times when the most intolerable bibber amongst them will practise the severest abstinence. It is said that the Russians surpass all other nations in the con-

\* The *isdavoi*s are common *mushiks*, who act as couriers in the imperial palaces. They may be seen galloping about on their meagre steeds in all directions in and about St. Petersburg, charged with messages of various kinds. At first they receive a few rubles monthly, as salary, but in time rise to more lucrative situations in the imperial household.



sumption of brandy, and yet strange to say it does not seem to do them much injury. The fearful lessons given by Hogarth in his celebrated picture "Gin Lane," are little applicable in this country; these people who as infants have had drams administered by their depraved mothers, reach the age of eighty and a hundred years, and are withal as fresh and healthy as if they had swallowed so much new milk; they may say of brandy, what Voltaire, in his eightieth year, said of coffee,—that it must be very slow poison. When they get any money, they are seen to swallow this unholy fire-water in incredible quantities, not sipping it out of thimble-sized glasses, as we do, but out of tumblers, or, yet more uncereemoniously, out of the great pewter measures in which it is handed to them. Women, girls, boys, and even sucklings (literally I mean) take a share, which in other countries would have the worst consequences. Nevertheless, there are individuals to be found who have never put their lips to brandy, and others who will sometimes make a vow against drinking, and keep it, for years together. As extremes meet, and are said to call forth each other, there are also individuals, who after exhibiting examples of sobriety in their persons, seem all at once attacked by a perfect frenzy of drunkenness; and for months together will be found in a situation that assimilates them to the beast. In Lesser Russia, where the brandy idol, has his chief seat, and where on holidays whole villages of drunken people may be found, this strange madness has most form and substance, it would be well worth while for all who have any cognizance of the facts there-with connected, to put the result of their observations together. The Russians look on this mania for drunkenness as a disease, and call it *Sapoi*.

The great sums which the government draws from the monopoly of brandy, the encrmous wealth of the Otkuptshiks (the brandy farmers) who invariably grow rich by their thrice shameful trade, the ruined circumstances of hundreds and thousands, are the sad testimonials of the degree in which this poisonous flame-emitting idol rules this land, to whose altars all throng to offer up in sacrifice their own welfare, and the welfare of their families, and for whose insnaring gifts all pine and lust with a greediness of desire, that awakens at once the deepest disgust and the strongest compassion. The poor tormented soldier knows no other means of forgetting his condition for a moment but brandy; the most fervent prayer of the beggar is for brandy; the servants and peasants thank you for brandy as for God's best gift.

In the countless booths and drinking-houses in St. Petersburg in the year 1827, brandy and other liquors were sold to the amount of eight millions of rubles; in 1833 to eight millions and a half. That gives for every inhabitant, women and children included, twenty rubles yearly for brandy, or about two and a quarter pailfuls. If we exclude the children, foreigners, persons of rank, and the sick, we may form an idea, what immoderate toppers there must remain amongst the adults of the Tschornoi narod! The government is endeavouring to bring beer more into use, and thereby diminish the consumption of brandy. It is therefore consolatory to hear that beer is now better made and much more drunk in St. Petersburg than formerly. In 1827 the amount consumed in beer and mead was mforty-two thousand rubles; in 1832 seven hundred and sixty thousand rubles. In the last four years the consumption of brandy in St. Petersburg increased in the following ratio :—100, 105, 110, 115,



somewhat less than the increase of the population; the consumption of beer as 1, 3, 6, 11. The finer kinds of brandy and liquors show the greatest increase; a proof that the taste is more refined, and that the amateurs must be on the increase among the upper classes.

Melancholy as the fact is of this enormous abuse of spirituous liquors in Russia, yet, as before observed, it is certain that the evil consequences are not so glaringly offensive as they would be among any other people. It is perhaps a general law of Nature that all abuses, where they are generally prevalent, shall not be injurious in a like proportion with their strength, because all poisons carry a certain antidote with them, and human nature in its most desperate condition is yet to be saved from utter destruction. Thus despotism depraves men less in Russia than it would do in a free country, because a multitude of devices have been formed for avoiding the evil. Serfdom in Russia is not half so oppressive as it would be to men who passed from a state of freedom to one of slavery; for the people develop a great elasticity of spirit, freedom from care, and cheerfulness in the midst of their humiliation, and have found out a multitude of alleviations which a people unaccustomed to slavery would not turn to account. Any other nation in the bonds of Russian despotism and serfdom, among whom such roguery and cheating were in practice, who were fettered in such a darkness of ignorance and superstition, and so plunged in sensual excess, would be the most detestable and unbearable people on the face of the earth. The Russians, on the contrary, with all their faults and sufferings, are very tolerably agreeable, gay, and contented. Their roguery scarcely shows amiss in them, their slavery they bear with as much ease as Atlas bore the weight of the globe, and out of their brandy-casks they swallow the deepest potations even with a grace. A disease in an otherwise healthy body manifests itself by the most deceive symptoms, while in a thoroughly corrupted system the evil will glide through all parts of the body without coming to an explosion, because one evil struggles with and counteracts the other; so in Russia those manifold evils are not seen in the full light of day as in other lands. The whole is veiled by a murky atmosphere, through which the right and the wrong cannot be clearly discerned. Every thing is compromised, smoothed over; no sickness is brought into a strong light, or compelled to a palpable revelation. With us the boys in the street shout after a drunken man, and pelt him with dirt and hard names, which raises a disturbance immediately. This is never the case in Russia, and a stranger might, from the absence of drunken squabbles and noise, be led to conclude that they were a sober people, till he observed that the absence of all attention to the fact is the cause of his mistake. To his no small astonishment he will see two, three, or four people, apparently in full possession of their reason, walking together; suddenly the whole party will reel and stagger, and one or the other measure his length in the mire, where he lies unnoticed, unless by his brother or a police-officer.

Our German drunkards are coarse, noisy, and obtrusive; intoxication makes an Italian or a Spaniard gloomy and revengeful, and an Englishman brutal; but the Russians, the more the pity, in the highest degree humorous and cheerful: the more the pity, I say, because if the consequences of the evil showed themselves more offensively, the evil itself would be more energetically combated. In the first stage of drunkenness the Russians begin to gossip and tell stories, sing and fall into each other's

arms; at a more advanced stage even enemies embrace, abjuring all hostility amidst a thousand protestations of eternal friendship; then all strangers present are most cordially greeted, kissed and caressed, let them be of what age or rank they may. It is all "little father," "little mother," "little brother," "little grandmother," and if their friendliness be not returned with a like warmth, then it is "Ah, little father, you are not angry that we are tipsy? Ah, it's very true, we're all tipsy together! Ah, it is abominable! Pray forgive us—punish us—beat us." Then ensue new caresses; they embrace your knees, kiss your feet, and entreat you to forgive their obtrusiveness. Other nations, whose whole moral strength lies in their cultivated reason, show themselves dangerous when the abuse of spirituous liquors frees their passions from this restraint. But the Russian, whose reason is little cultivated, and who, when he is good is so from innate kindness of feeling, cannot be so degraded by drink. He shows himself what he is—a child much in want of guidance. It is curious enough, however, that even in drunkenness a Russian's native cunning never forsakes him; it is very difficult to move him, be he ever so drunk, to any baseness not to his advantage. The deeper a Russian drinks the more does the whole world appear to him *couleur de rose*, till at last his raptures break forth in a stream of song; and, stretched upon his sledge, talking to himself and all good spirits, he returns at length to his own home, whither his wiser horse has found his way unguided.

The inferiority of the Russians to the West Europeans is freely admitted by them. If their productions are found fault with, they will often say in excuse, "Ah, sir, it's only Russian work. I made it myself; how should it be better? The Germans, we know, understand every thing better." "*Prostaya rabota*" (common work) is not only an expression in use among foreigners for Russian work, but one heard frequently from the natives themselves. I once asked a dealer in toys and baskets where he got his wares. "The toys," said he, "are German work, the baskets common" (*i. e.* Russian). The Russian word for common (*prostoi*) is regularly adopted by the German-Russians in this sense. In speaking apologetically to a friend they will say, "You will find nothing very elegant in my household arrangements; it is all very *prostoi*." "We are great rogues," the Russians will often add; "each tries to outwit the other as much as he can; and I must tell you frankly to be on your guard with me." They make the frankest revelations with respect to themselves, so that one feels inclined to hold them free from fault, even while they are confessing that they share the failings of their country. "Ah, we Russians are indolent—we cheat wherever herever we can—our priests permit the most outrageous roguery to go unreproved—our people in authority are the most corrupt in the world; we are only active when there is money to be gained; nobler objects, knowledge and science, have no attractions for us, though we may be forced to attain them. We do nothing well or thoroughly, and are sunk in unequalled sensuality."

This very openness it is that so often misleads a stranger; he knows not what to think of them. "What is the price of those plums?" Two rubles, sir; they are excellent, real French." "Ah, you Russian rogue—they French!" "Yes, yes, I say real French. Of course, as I am a Russian, it must be a lie. Oh, the Russians are rogues, sir, that all the world knows. The French and Germans never cheat—they are all honest people, and have only good things! Well, I advise you not to buy my

plums. I say they are French, but they are no such thing. See, we Russians lie and cheat wherever we can; we have no conscience at all, and, as the Poles say, 'he must be a cunning fellow who outwits a Russian.' And the Poles are right, sir. Do buy something of me, sir, and I will wager what you like you don't go uncheated out of my shop. Ha, ha, ha, ha! the Russian rogues! He who is not cheated by a Russian must be a cunning fellow."

Confessions of this kind are so often heard, that it is impossible to help wishing they were somewhat less willing to admit their weaknesses, and less ready to content themselves, as they generally do, with the expression "*Shto sdälai?*" (what's to be done?) Nothing is easier than to make a Russian confess, and nothing is more common, than for him to repeat his offence after having confessed and been punished or pardoned for similar ones a dozen times. As they have immeasurably more cunning than understanding, are far more clever than rational, their own proverb "*sum sa rasum sasholl*" (his wits have run away with his reason) is quite true; a correct psychological glance into their own inward man has revealed to them how often exaggerated cunning and calculation has led them to most irrational practices. It is honourable to us Germans, that the Russians (that is the lower classes) have so much confidence in us; would to heaven every German justified this confidence, and did not, as unhappily many of them in Russia do, profit by the credit of the national character, and sin at the expense of thirty millions of his forefathers and fellow-countrymen. A Russian of rank will intrust a German with his secrets, or his valuables, much more readily than his own countryman. The *Isvoschtshik* will not willingly let a Russian go without having paid, or without leaving a pledge, while he will readily give a German credit.

The Russian of distinction makes as much difference between his own countrymen and the Germans, as the lower classes do. "*Sluishi! tui*" (hark thee), says a Russian nobleman to a Russian tailor; every body who is neither a nobleman nor foreigner is thou'd in Russia, even the wealthy merchant, "*padi sudi*" (come here) measure me for a coat, velvet collar, bright buttons, long in the waist; dost understand? let it be ready the day after to-morrow, dost hear? "*Slushi*" (I hear and obey); "*stupai*" (be off then). "My dear Mr. Meyer," he will say to an *Innostranez* (foreigner), "excuse me that I have given you the trouble to come, pray be seated. I want a new coat, would you advise green or blue? Pray make it in the newest fashion, and if possible, I should like to have it in a fortnight. I know how much you have to do. If it cannot be helped I will wait three weeks. I am much obliged to you. And how go affairs with you, *Gospodin Meyer*? how do you get on with Prince R. If I can be of any service to you in that business let me know. If possible, you will let me have the coat before the three weeks, will you, not? adieu!"

A foreign workman is paid what he asks without hesitation, even if he ask sixty rubles for the mere cutting out of a coat. With the Russian mechanic it is, "What! twenty rubles for such a trifle as that! Twenty strokes with a cudgel from the police! There's ten for thee, and quite enough! take it." "*Slushu*" (I obey), answers the poor overborne rogue, makes a bow, and goes away quite content.

The Russians are sometimes called the French of the North; as lame a comparison, if seriously meant, as that of modern Moscow with old Rome. The differences between the two nations are endless. Something of like-



ness there is, however, in the fact that in the demeanour of the lowest Russian there is a certain adroitness, a *savoir faire* and *tournure*, altogether wanting to the Germans. Look at the cut of the commonest national garment, and in spite of dirt and coarseness, there will be something *comme il faut* about it. Even under the bearskins, slender and rounded forms may be perceived. The awkward and ridiculous vestments occasionally seen among us, are unknown here: to judge by his clothing, a Russian must be one of the most elegant and rational of men. Observe a couple of Russians of the lowest class: if they have a heavy burden to transport, how cleverly and readily it is done, in spite of the most deplorable means of carriage. In St. Petersburg, the most ordinary peasants, picked up quite at random, will be charged with the transport of the costliest and most fragile articles; for example, immense looking-glasses, porcelain, &c., and will execute the commission with as much dexterity as if it had been their employment from childhood. I should like to see one quantity of glass packed and carried by German peasants, and another by Russians, and strike the balance between the relative skill and address of the two nations, according to the quantity of merchandise demolished!

The excellent fables of Kruiloff, the lessons of prudence they contain, and the striking comparisons of which they are full, are drawn directly from the life of the people; and we may find daily opportunities of witnessing scenes, and listening to speeches and advice, such as Kruiloff gives in his fables. As a fit conclusion to these considerations on the national character, we will give some of his pictures, which in many respects are very characteristic.

The blind enthusiasm which often overlooks the most essential objects, is held up to ridicule in the writing of this Russian Æsop in a St. Petersburg Tshinnovnik,\* who relates to his friend, that he has been to the Museum, and seen the most wonderful things; "birds of the most wonderful colours, beautiful butterflies, all foreign! and gnats, flies, and golden beetles, so small, that they are scarcely to be seen with the naked eye." "But what say you to the elephant, and the mammoth, that are there also, my friend?" "Elephant, mammoth, ah, the deuce! I really did not notice them."

In another of the illustrations accompanying the fables, a rich landholder is presenting to his friend his much-lauded musicians: "I have the best band in the world," he exclaims, "all excellent fellows—not one of them has robbed me, and there is not a drunkard among them."

"That may be," answers the guest, holding his ears, "but for mercy's sake let them keep silence, for their music rends my very soul!"

The policy of the Russian slave-master is betrayed by an uncle to his nephew thus: he takes him into his garden and shows him his fishpond, which he has filled with pike. "But, good heavens!" cries the inexperienced nephew, "the pike will devour all the smaller fish!" "Ha, ha! you young fool, can't you understand? That is just what I want; afterwards I shall kill the fattened pike."

The conversation of two Kupzi betrays how the rogues in the *gostinnoi dvor* cheat and circumvent each other. "See, cousin," says one, "how God has helped me to-day. I have sold for three hundred rubles some Polish cloth that was not worth half the money: it was to a booby of an officer, whom I persuaded it was fine Dutch. See, here is the money, thirty fine red bank-notes, spick and span new!" "Show me the notes, friend,

\*Subordinate employé.



they are every one bad! Out upon you, fox, do you let yourself be so cheated by a wolf?"

In another picture the Gout and a Spider are meeting, and questioning one another on the road. "I am just come from Prince Andrai Ivanowitsch," says the spider, "in whose house I have lived a long time; but, heavens! what a deplorable life! The man is rolling in luxury, eats and drinks all day long, lies in bed and on soft sofas, and his servants will not let a poor insect any where alone, for fear he should disturb their master. They break my fine webs every day; and when I have, with unwearied diligence, built up my house anew, it is as much as I can get a fly, which dainty food they will no more suffer in the prince's house than they will me myself. I am tired of this anxious life at last, and I am going to seek a more convenient lodging elsewhere."

"And I have just come," says the Gout, "from the miserable hut of the peasant Paul Ignatievitch, where I was as little pleased as you with the prince. The man has no rest all day long, and is constantly fighting with wind and weather. Scarcely have I made the attempt to be a little friendly with his bearskin, than up he jumps, throws aside the skin, and threshes corn or chops wood till we can't hear or see. His benches and chairs are all hard oaken wood without cushions; not the smallest comfort to be thought of. Then every thing is disorderly and dirty, and all sorts of creatures are continually flying in and out. I am tired of such doings, and have fore-sworn all peasants' houses for ever; and, what do you think? I have a mind to try your Prince Andrai, of whom you have said so many agreeable things."

"Sister dear, pray show me the way to the peasant Paul, with whom I think I could get on very well; for he will certainly put up with such a small evil as I am in some corner of his room."

The Russian peasant is far from sparing, in his criticism, the rich and great, from whom he bears so much, although conscious of its injustice. In one of these fables a nobleman gives a box on the ear to one of his serfs, who has just saved his life from the attack of a bear, and cries out, "Stupid rascal, to tear the bear's skin so carelessly with thy clumsy axe! Why didst not stun him with a stone, or strangle him with a rope? What is his skin now worth to me at the furrier's? Only wait, rascal, and I'll take an opportunity of reckoning with thee for the value of it."

In another, a rich man announces in the newspapers that, moved by compassion and the love of God, he has resolved on a certain day to clothe, feed, and provide with all necessaries, all the poor who shall apply to him. Hereupon he receives the praises of all his friends, of the pious, and the public; but on the appointed day his courtyard is full of fierce dogs, whose teeth effectually bar all entrance to it.

The cunning of the Mushiks, in eluding the laws and the ordinances of religion, surpasses the art of the devil himself. It is said, "Ye shall eat no flesh on fast-days; ye shall not boil eggs in water on your hearths, nor eat of any such eggs." A peasant, not inclined to forego the enjoyment of eggs on a fast-day, knocks a nail into the wall, suspends the egg from it by a wire, and placing his lamp underneath, contrives to cook it in this manner. He defends himself to a priest who has caught him in the fact by the assurance that he did not think that any breach of the commandment. "Ah, the devil himself must have taught thee that!" cries the priest in high displeasure. "Well then, yes, father, I must confess it—it was the devil who taught me." "No, that is not true," cries the devil, who, unobserved, is

one of the party sitting on the stove, and laughing heartily as he looks at the cunningly-placed egg. "It is not I that taught him this trick, for I see it now for the first time myself."

"There is no knowing how to get on in this world. Do a thing one way and it fails—try it another and that fails also," said one peasant to another. "A year ago I went a little tipsy into the loft with a light in my hand, and, not taking heed, I set the hay on fire, and my house was burnt to the ground. Yesterday I went into the loft again, not quite sober; but this time I put the light carefully out: and now, while I was feeling about and forgot the door, I tumbled through, and have unluckily sprained my foot, and broken two of my teeth out. You are a prudent man, *lubesnoi kum* (dear cousin), give me your advice—shall I go with or without a light another time?" "My advice is, dear cousin, another time not to get drunk."

What the Russians think of authors is shown in another picture, representing a part of hell. There are two caldrons hanging in the foreground; in one sits a robber, in the other a wicked author. Under the caldron of the latter the devil is busily employed in feeding a large fire; while under the robber's kettle there is only a little dry wood, which seems to emit a very agreeable warmth. The author, who has lifted the lid of his kettle to look over at the thief, complains to the devil that he is worse treated than so notorious a rogue; but the devil gives him a knock on the head, and says, "Thou wast worse than he; his sins have died with him, but thine will remain indestructible for ages."

The presumption of mankind in striving to attain the impossible, and at the same time the ready belief of the public in boasters and charlatans, is well satirized. A magpie gives notice that on such a day she will set fire to the sea with a lighted match, and men and animals have crowded to the coast to see. The magpie flies with the kindled match to the sea, and as soon as she has touched it, what follows?—simply that the water extinguishes the fire, and the sea is *not* burnt. "Did not I tell you it would be so?" says a lapdog hereupon to his neighbour the sheep.

The ass comes in for his share. The animals are assembled to try the pike for his crimes; and the ass, with universal applause, pronounces sentence, that the pike shall be drowned. The pike is carried with great rejoicing to a deep pond, where, after getting rid of the other animals, he finds himself extremely comfortable.

Again : the pig and the cat swear friendship, and conspire against the mice. The cat gets many a good dinner thereby, but the mice eat the bacon off the pig's back.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE CHURCHES.

MADAME de Staël, when she beheld Moscow from the elevation of the Kremlin, turned to her companions and exclaimed, "*Voilà Rome Tatare.*" The Russians themselves like to compare their city to that world-subduer

of antiquity; and many as are the peculiarities that distinguish the one from the other, it is not to be denied, that there are points wherein they assimilate, and among them, is, that of extreme toleration in the matter of religion. With whatever tenacity the Russians, like the Romans, may cling to the religion of their forefathers, they yet willingly admit other gods by the side of their own, and either because they think, like the Romans, that it can do no harm to reverence other invisible powers, or because, to give the matter a more Christianlike expression, as they well say, "*Vso adin Bog*" (There is one God over all), they will even bow down as reverentially in foreign churches as in their own.

The capital of the Russians contains places of worship for all confessions. In the finest street in St. Petersburg, the Nevskoi Prospekt, there are Armenian, Greek, Protestant, Roman Catholic, United and Disunited, Sunnite and Schiite places of prayer in most familiar neighbourhood; and the street has, therefore, not inaptly received the *sobriquet* of Toleration-street.

St. Petersburg, like Berlin, is a child of our days; a birth that first saw the light under the sun of a philosophical age. In opposition to Moscow, as Berlin in opposition to Vienna, St. Petersburg has neither so many nor such distinguished churches as Moscow, although the major part are built in a pleasing and tasteful style: in the modern Russian, which is a mixture of the Grecian, Byzantine, old Russian, and new European architecture, the Byzantine, which was brought from Constantinople with Christianity, being the most prominent. A building in the form of a cross; in the midst, a large cupola, and at the four ends, four small, narrow-pointed cupolas, the points surmounted by crosses; a grand entrance, adorned with many columns, and three side entrances without columns, such is the exterior form of the greater part of the Russian churches, including the thirty churches of St. Petersburg,—about one-tenth of the number dispersed through the streets of Moscow the Holy. In the former, the interiors are lighter, brighter, more simple, more elegant; in the latter, more overloaded with ornament, darker, more varied in colour, more grotesque. The handsomest church in St. Petersburg is Isaac's church. The exterior is finished. It wants only the last decoration for the interior, the trophies and the pictures of saints. This church stands in the largest and most open place in the city, in the midst of its finest buildings and monuments: the Winter Palace, the Admiralty, the War-office, Alexander's pillar, and the rock of Peter the Great; and will, when it has laid aside its mantle of scaffolding, show itself worthy of such neighbours. On the spot where it stands, they have been at work upon a place of worship for the last century. A wooden church was followed by a church of brick; a church of marble was then attempted, which failed, and was finished in brick. This half-and-half building vanished in its turn, and, under Nicholas the First, the present magnificent building was erected, which will scarcely find so splendid a successor. It is entirely composed of granite blocks and polished marble. To make a firm foundation, a whole forest of piles was sunk in the swampy soil. From the level of the upper part of Peter's place, rise three broad flights of steps, which separately served the fabulous giants of the Finnish mythology for seats. They are formed from masses of granite rock brought from Finland. These steps lead from the four sides of the building to the four chief entrances, each of which has a superb peristyle. The pillars of these peristyles are sixty feet high, and have a diameter of seven feet.



All magnificent granite monoliths from Finland, buried for centuries in its swamps, till brought to light by the triumphant power of Russia, and rounded, polished, and erected as Caryatides, to the honour of God, in his temple. The pillars are crowned with capitals of bronze, and support the enormous beam of a frieze formed of six fire-polished blocks. Over the peristyles, and at twice their height, rises the chief and central cupola, higher than it is wide, in the Byzantine proportion. It is supported also by thirty pillars of smooth polished granite, which, although gigantic in themselves, look small compared to those below. The cupola is covered with copper overlaid with gold, and glitters like the sun over a mountain. From its centre rises a small elegant rotunda, a miniature repetition of the whole, looking like a chapel on a mountain-top. The whole edifice is surrounded by the crowning and far-seen golden cross. Four smaller cupolas, resembling the greater in every particular, stand around, like children round a mother, and complete the harmony visible in every part. The walls of the church are to be covered with marble, and no doubt Isaac's church, will be the most remarkable building in St. Petersburg, and supersede the Kasan church of the Virgin for great state festivals. This Kasan church, which stands on the perspective, is a monument of the so-often failing spirit of imitation in Russia. The Russians wish to unite in their capital all that is grand or beautiful in the whole civilized world. This church is meant for a copy of St. Peter's at Rome, and unbearable as a copy, is moreover not a good copy. The puny effort is almost comic in its contrast to the mighty work of Buonarroti. It is fortunate that it lies so far from its original; after the many lands he must pass through to reach it, the foreign spectator may have forgotten the impression of the southern prototype, and hence find the northern copy endurable. As in Rome, a portico of pillars leads from either side in a semicircle to the two entrances of the church; but the pillars are small, and what in Rome seemed necessary and suitable to circumstances, is here a superfluous and incomprehensible appendage. The doors are of bronze covered with a multitude of worthless bas-reliefs. In great niches along the sides of the church stand colossal statues of the grand dukes Vladimir, and Alexander Nevsky, of St. John and St. Andrew. In the interior, which is little suited to the wants of divine service, as performed in Russia, they were obliged to place the high altar, not opposite the chief entrance, but very awkwardly at the side. All is dark and straitened, and one cannot help pitying the fifty-six monoliths, the mighty giants who support the little roof, and lamenting that their prodigious strength is not employed in a labour more worthy of them.

Apart from these architectural discords, the church is not wanting in interest. First of all the greedy eye is attracted by the silver of the Ikonostases (the pictorial wall of the sanctuary). The balustrades, doors, and doorways of the Ikonostases are generally of wood, carved and gilded, but in this church all its beams and posts are of massive silver. The pillars of the balustrade round the holy place, the posts of the three doors, the arches twenty feet in height above the altar, and the frames of the pictures are of fine silver. The silver beams are all highly polished, and reflect with dazzling brilliancy the light of the thousand tapers that burn before them. I could not learn how many hundred weight of silver were employed, but, doubtless, many thousands of dozens of French and German spoons, and hundreds of soup-tureens and teapots must have been



melted down to furnish the material; for it was the Cossacks, laden with no inconsiderable booty from the campaigns of 1813 and 1814, that made an offering of this mass of silver to the holy Mother of Kasan, for the object to which it is now appropriated. They seem to have a peculiar veneration for this Madonna, who is half their countrywoman, for John Vassielevitsh brought her from Kasan to Moscow, whence Peter the Great transported her to St. Petersburg. Her picture set with pearls and precious stones hangs in the church. It was before this picture that Kutusoff prayed before he advanced to meet the enemy in 1812, for which reason she is considered to be closely connected with that campaign.

All the St. Petersburg churches are already adorned with trophies gained from various nations of Europe and Asia, particularly the Kasan church, the cathedral of the metropolitan; they are hung up on the pillars and in the corners of the church. Keys of German and French towns, marshal's batons from French generals, and a number of standards from Turks and Persians. The Persian flags are easily known by a silver hand as large as life fastened to the end. The Turkish flags, surmounted by the crescent, are merely large, handsome unsoiled pieces of cloth, mostly red, and so new and spotless that they might be sold again to the merchant by the ell. It looks as if both Turks and Persians had handed their flags over to the Russians out of politeness, and without striking a blow. The French colours which hang near them, offer a sad but most honourable contrast. They are rent to pieces, and to many of the eagles, only a single dusty fragment is attached. Of some the Russians have only carried off the flag-staff, perhaps because the French ensign had swallowed the last rag, that it might not fall into the hands of the enemy. How many unknown deeds of heroism may not those flags have witnessed. Those eagles with their expanded wings, with which they vainly sought to cover the whole empire, look strangely enough in the places they now roost in.

Amongst the field-marshal's batons is that of the Prince of Eckmühl, and among the keys suspended to all the pillars, are those of the cities of Hamburg, Leipzig, Dresden, Rheims, Breda, Utrecht, and many other German, French and Netherland cities, before whose gates a Russian trumpet has once been blown.

After the church of Kasan, that of Peter and Paul, in the fortress, is the most interesting. It was built by an Italian architect, under Peter the Great, and stands nearly in the middle of the city, opposite the Winter Palace. Its pointed slender tower, exactly resembling that of the Admiralty, rises like a mast 340 feet in height; for the last 150 feet the tower is so small and thin, that it must be climbed like a pine-tree. On one occasion, when the metal angel on the top wanted some repairs, an adventurous workman reached the summit thus: from the last gallery of the tower he knocked in a hook as high as he could reach from a ladder, threw a rope over it, and dragged himself up by it; he then knocked in a second hook, which he also mounted by means of his rope, and so reached the top. On the gilding of this slender tower, which is seen from all parts of St. Petersburg like a golden needle hovering in the air, particularly when, as is frequently the case, the lower part is veiled in fog, 10,000 ducats have already been lavished.

The Peter-Paul church in St. Petersburg, is a kind of sequel to the Arkhangelskoi Sabor in Moscow; the one continues the register of the

deceased rulers of Russia, from where the other leaves off. In Moscow are interred the Russian czars down to Peter the Great; he, and those that succeeded him, in the Peter-Paul church. Whoever has seen the monuments of the Polish kings at Cracow, or those of the French and English kings and Italian princes, will wonder at the simplicity and absence of ornament in this last resting-place of the Russian emperors, particularly when he thinks of the splendour of the Winter Palace. The simple coffins are placed in the vaults, and over them in the church is nothing further in the shape of a monument, than a stone coffin-shaped sarcophagus, covered with a red pall. On the pall the name of the deceased emperor or emperor's son is embroidered in golden letters, quite simply, as "His Imperial Highness the Grand-Duke Constantine;" "His Imperial Majesty the Emperor Peter the First," &c. In some there is nothing but the initial letters, and here and there some unimportant trophy. On the sarcophagus of the Grand-Duke Constantine, lie merely the keys of some Polish fortresses Peter the Third, to whom Catherine in her lifetime refused this place, rests there now. Paul placed both Catherine and his father there. A hundred cannon, impregnable bastions, and a garrison of 3000 men defend the place, which can be desecrated by hostile hands only when all St. Petersburg lies in ruins. The Russian princes are the only ones in Europe, as far as I know, who are buried within the walls of a fortress.

Around the sarcophagi, on the pillars, and in the corners, flags and other trophies are suspended as in the Kasan church. Those of Persia and Turkey are particularly numerous. They lie here as in a museum; batons of Turkish commanders and grand viziers, generally made of brass or silver, beautifully wrought, something like the small battle-axes in use in the middle ages; the triple horse-tails of the pachas, many insignia of the Janizaries, and a collection of most singularly-formed keys of Turkish and Persian fortresses. All the Persian flags have the outstretched silver hand at their extremities. The flag itself is an excessively long triangular piece of double silk stuff trimmed with lace, having in the middle a panther, over whose back radiates the broad disk of a sun. They are all in as good condition as the Turkish; in one or two a ball has passed through the sun, and on one only can be traced five bloody finger-marks of the Turkish standard-bearer who died defending it. Three hundred of these Persian suns and Turkish crescents bend here before the cross of the Christians.

Among the sacred vessels we were shown some turned in wood and ivory, the work of Peter the Great. It is incomprehensible how this, unwearied man could govern a great empire in all its details, establish manufactures, build cities, dig canals, organize an army, a fleet, a host of public offices, found schools, academies, universities, theatres, and withal find time to make these crosses, candelabras, and cups of ebony and ivory, and so to finish and polish every minute part, that any German guild would have pronounced it a masterpiece. To show with what extreme art these productions are finished, we may mention that the centre of one of these crosses is ornamented with a circular slide of ivory on which the crucifixion, with the mourning women below, are carved in bas-relief. A multitude of rays issue from this slide as from a sun, every ray is turned in ebony, in the ornamenting of which, with all manner of carving, an enormous degree of labour must have been expended. It is impossible to withhold our astonishment at this gifted and enthroned Proteus, and

he who stands by his grave, he he who he may, will wish peace to his ashes, and blessing and prosperity to all the good that has proceeded from him. Great God! who would not wish that Peter could, from his tomb, cast one glance upon the flourishing city, that with such unspeakable toil and difficulty he founded amidst the swamps of the Neva. But life is so short that a man can rarely enjoy the fruits of what he has discovered, planted, or created. Perhaps Peter's prophetic spirit foresaw what here would be; yet here, if ever, the reality must have surpassed all expectation.

Among the Greek-Russian churches, that of the Smolnoi convent is distinguished for the taste of its decorations. It was finished about a year ago, and may serve strangers as a specimen of the modern Russian style of church architecture. It is more spacious than Russian churches are in general, and its five cupolas are placed in harmonious relation with one another. They are painted deep blue, sprinkled with golden stars. A high, magnificent, beautifully-designed iron grating—whose rails, or rather pillars, are wound with wreaths of vine-leaves and flowers, in ironwork—surrounds the courtyards of the convent; and above it wave the elegant birch and lime trees. Seated on a gentle elevation on a corner of land, round which the Neva bends to the west, this cloister, with its mysterious reserve, and the alluring colours with which it is clothed, resembles a magic palace of the Arabian Nights. From the eastern suburb of St. Petersburg, and from Sunday-street, which is two versts long, and leads directly to it, the cloister is seen far and near; and from all quarters of the world, the orthodox believers bow and cross themselves at the sight of its cupolas. This building is dedicated to the education and instruction of young girls of noble and citizen birth, of whom not less than 500 are brought up at the cost of the government, and 300 at their own. The church of the cloister, which is open to the public as a place of worship, has something extremely pleasing in its style of decoration; only two colours are to be seen, that of the gold framework of the ornamental objects, and of the white imitative marble, highly polished, and covering all the walls, pillars, and arches. Several galleries, which are illuminated on high festival-days, run like garlands round the interior of the dome. Not less than four-and-twenty stoves of gigantic dimensions are scattered about the church, which they keep at the temperature of the study, and greet all that enter, with true Christian warmth. These stoves are built like little chapels, so that at first they are taken for church ornaments. The Russians love pomp and splendour in their churches; in this, the balustrades surrounding the Ikonostas are of the finest glass, the doors are formed of golden columns twined and interlaced with vine leaves and ears of corn in carved and gilded wood. The pictures of this Ikonostas are all new, painted by the pupils of the St. Petersburg Academy. The faces of the apostles and saints, of the Madonna and of the Redeemer, in the old Russian pictures, have all the well-known Byzantine or Indian physiognomy on the handkerchief of St. Veronica in Boisseré's collection; small, long-cut eyes, dark complexion, excessively thin cheeks, a small mouth, thin lips, slender ringlets, and a scanty beard; the nose uncommonly sharp and pointed, quite vanishing at the root between the eyes, and the head very round. In the new pictures of the Russian school, they have copied the national physiognomy as seen in the Russian merchants; full red cheeks, a long beard, light and abundant hair, large blue eyes, and a blunted nose. It is wonderful that the Russian clergy have



permitted this deviation from the old models; the new ones, however, are held in very little respect by the people, who reverence only the old, dusty and dusky saints, and are as little inclined to accept faces they can understand, as to hear divine service in a language they can comprehend, for the old Slavonian dialect, which continues to be used, is unintelligible to them. The Empress Maria, the foundress and benefactress of the convent, has a simple monument in the church, which is dedicated in her honour to St. Mary.

There are only two convents in St. Petersburg; this of Smolnoi, — one only in name, for the Empress Catherine's 20 nuns have long since been dispossessed by the 800 young ladies, — and that of St. Alexander Nevskoi, for monks. The latter is one of the most celebrated in Russia, a Lavra,\* and inferior in rank only to the "Lavra of the Trinity" in Moscow, and to the Lavra of the Cave in Kiev. Its proper name is Alexander Nevskaya svätotroitskaya Lavra (the Alexander Nevsky sacred Trinity Lavra). It is the seat of the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, and stands at the extreme end of the Nevskoi Prospekt, where it occupies a large space, enclosing within its walls, churches, towers, gardens, and monks' cells. Peter the Great founded it in honour of the canonized Grand-Duke Alexander, who, in a great battle here defeated the Swedes and knights of the military orders, and whose remains were brought hither in a silver coffin. Peter's successors increased the possessions and buildings of the cloister, and Catherine built its cathedral, one of the handsomest churches in St. Petersburg. For the interior decoration, marble was brought from Italy, precious stones from Siberia, and pearls from Persia; it is further adorned with some good copies after Guido Reni and Perugino; the altarpiece, the Annunciation of the Virgin, is by Rafaele Mengs, or as the monk our guide assured as by "Arphaële" (Rafaele) himself. In one of the chapels are some pictures by "Robinsa," that is, not Robinson, but Rubens. "*On Italiansky*" (He was an Italian), as our worthy Father added in explanation. Pictures by foreign masters are otherwise something unheard of in a Russian church. From Robinson to the Cannibals is no great leap, and therefore we were the less frightened when our guide, pointing to a corner of the church said, "There lies a Cannibal." We read the inscription, it was the well-known Russian general Hannibal. The Russians, who have no H, change that letter almost always into K.

On two great pillars opposite the altar, are two excellent portraits, Peter the Great and Catherine the Second, larger than life. These two, as "Founder" and "Finisher," are every where united in St. Petersburg, like man and wife. What might have been the result had they been really so? Would he have driven her out as he did his sister Sophia? or she him, as she did her husband Peter the Third? or would Russia have gained doubly by the union? In a side-chapel stands the monument of Alexander Nevsky. It is of massive silver, and contains not less than five thousand pounds of pure metal; it is a silver mountain fifteen feet high, on which stands a silver catafalco, and silver angels, as big as a man, with trumpets, and silver flowers, and a quantity of bas-relief in silver, representing the battle of the Neva. We lighted up two wax tapers at his grave, and were pleased to see how calmly they glimmered in his honour. This kindling

\* The holiest convents in the empire, the seats of the Metropolitans, are called Lavras; the other convents are only monastirs.



of lamps and tapers in Russian churches is a pretty custom; the little flame is so living a symbol of the continued life of the soul, and beyond all other material things, flame is the best representation of the spiritual. The Russians have so closely adopted this idea, that there is no interment, no baptism, no betrothing, in short, no sacred ceremony without torch, lamp, or taper to be thought of; fire is for them the pledge of the presence of the Holy Spirit, and hence illuminations play the most important part in their church ceremonies.

The keys of Adrianople are suspended to the tomb of St. Alexander; they are strikingly small, not much larger than the keys of a money-box, which, in fact, Adrianople has in many respects been to Russia.

The Nevsky cloister has profited yet more by the presents sent from Persepolis to the northern Petropolis, when the Russian ambassador Griboyedoff was murdered in Teheran, than by the Byzantine tribute. The Persian gifts consisted of a long train of rare animals, Persian webs, gold-stuffs, and pearls. They reached St. Petersburg in the winter. The pearls, and goldstuffs, and rich shawls were carried in great silver and gold dishes by magnificently-dressed Persians. The Persian prince Khosreff Mirza drove in an imperial state equipage with six horses; the elephants, bearing on their backs towers filled with Indian warriors, had leathern boots to protect them from the cold, and the cages of the tigers and lions were provided with double skins of the northern polar bears.

It was like a procession in the Arabian Nights, it would have been said among us, and the population of whole provinces would have run together to behold it. "It was a trifling affair," they said in St. Petersburg, "and some of the pearls were false." It excited but little attention. The elephants soon died of the cold, and a part of the pearls were given to the Nevsky cloister. We saw whole boxes full of them there, besides a rich collection of mitres set in jewels, pontifical robes of gold brocade, and souvenirs of individual metropolitans and princes; among them, an episcopal staff turned by Peter the Great, and presented by him to the first St. Petersburg metropolitan, another of amber, from Catherine II., and a number of other valuables which, found elsewhere, singly, would be admired and described, but here in the mass of treasure are unnoticed. The library of about ten thousand volumes, independently of a number of very valuable manuscripts, concerning which many books quite unknown to us have been written, contains many rare specimens of the antiquities of Russia.

The Sergieff convent, between St. Petersburg and Peterhof, contains little that is remarkable, unless we reckon as such its Archimandrite, who is a young and handsome man, and was formerly an officer in the army. The Preobrashensky church belongs to one of the oldest regiments of guards, founded by Peter the Great, the tenth legion of the Russian Cæsars. This church, the "Spass-Preobrashenskoi-Sabor," is one of the most considerable of the city, and more than any other adorned both without and within, with trophies from conquered nations. The railing that surrounds the churchyard is formed of Turkish and French cannon. Every three of those three hundred cannon, one large and two smaller, mounted on a granite pedestal, with their mouths pointed downwards, form a column. Around the cannon, chains of different thickness, gracefully twined, are hung like garlands between the columns; on the summit of each is enthroned a Russian double eagle of iron,

with expanded wings. Within, the church is adorned with flags and halberds, the pillars look like palm-trees of which every leaf is a lance. Here also travellers are shown a production of Russian inventive talent; the work of a common peasant. It is a large, splendid piece of clock-work, made by him in his native village, bought for 20,000 rubles by his lord, and presented to the church. The works are said to be so good as to have stood in no need of repair during the six years the clock has been in the church.

Trinity church is also a modern erection like the Smolnoi convent, and very similar to it. The exterior offers an example of the very fantastic manner in which the Russians decorate their churches. Under the cornice of the dark blue star-bespangled cupola, an arabesque of vine-leaves and flowers runs all round. The garlands are held up by angels, and between every pair of them a crown of thorns is introduced as a centre. But for this martyr-token of Christianity, we might fancy the gay temple of some Grecian god before us.

The half, and certainly the more important half, of the churches of St. Petersburg are the erections of the present century. The Nicolai church, the church of the Resurrection, and some others of the time of Catherine, are not worth mention in an architectural point of view. In the church of the Resurrection I saw some very singular offerings to the saints; among others a patchwork quilt, probably the offering of some devout beggar, and containing the best of her rags. It was made out of a vast number of pieces great and small, woollen, linen, and silk, worked with gold thread, perhaps taken from the cast off epaulets of some officer of the guards, and in the middle a golden cross was sewed on. In the Nicolai church, which is built in two stories, one for divine service during winter, and the other in summer, I found the four small cupolas tenanted by a number of pigeons, who had made their nests there, and were fed by the attendants with the rice which the pious placed there for the dead. I entered the church at the same time with a splendidly-attired merchant's wife, who had just stepped out of her carriage, and called out to her French companion, "*Attendez un moment, je veux faire mes prières.*" She went to all the saints' pictures one after the other, made her reverence, ogling them most graciously, and then danced out again with a well-pleased motion of the head, and drove to another church. Among the churches of other confessions, that built by Paul, when he assumed the protectorship of the Maltese Order, is at least interesting. It is quite in the style of the old churches of the Knights of St. John, and still contains the chair on which the emperor sat as grand-master of the order.

The largest catholic church is on the Prospekt, opposite the Kasan church. The priests are Germans, and the service half German, half Latin. It is attended by the Poles and Lithuanians, to whom the chanting, by the congregation, of the "immaculate Virgin," "the Queen of Heaven," "the Tower of God," "the Fortress of Zion," in itself sufficiently unintelligible, must be necessarily still more so here. The Russians rarely attend the catholic service; if they go to any foreign church it is generally the protestant. The catholics, Greeks, and Armenians (the latter have also a very pretty church on the Prospekt) hold to the doctrine of the Trinity, but the Dutch as it appears to a Duality; for, on their church stands the singular inscription, "*Deo et salvatori sacrum.*"

This church, with its very rich dotation, dates from Peter the Great, when the Dutch were the most considerable merchants, and were endowed by the liberal czar with so much land within the city, that many a Dutch cathedral may envy the church of this little northern colony.

The English are the only foreigners in St. Petersburg who keep exclusively to their own community, and form a kind of state within a state, or at least endeavour to do so. On their church on the Neva is inscribed, "Chapel of the English Factory," and the same is stamped on all their prayer books. This factory is not one of the least interesting of all the settlements that this remarkable nation has scattered over the whole globe. Though small in numbers, (there are about 800 souls,) it is extremely rich, and in credit, power, and opulence perhaps as important as a settlement of 20,000 individuals of any other nation. Many English have entered the Russian service, and seem to do extremely well in it. When I visited their church I counted twenty Russian epaulets on young English officers. "Farther, farther," said a voice behind me, as I stood in the entrance, looking over the little congregation and estimating their numbers. It was an elegant, but grave and severe-looking gentleman, who directed my attention to the regulations suspended from a pillar, which forbade standing in the passages, and then gave me a seat. On one occasion when the Emperor Nicholas visited this church, and stood still at the entrance, he also was addressed with the "Farther, farther! your majesty," and shown to a seat. Extreme quiet, which is not the least important part of public worship, and is certainly more conducive to devotion than singing or any other exercise, reigned over the whole assembly. But it was not all alike pleasing or edifying. The English episcopal service is certainly susceptible of much reformation and improvement. The very monotonous, though not displeasing singing, (they never make such an outcry as in many German congregations,) occupies the greater part of the time. The sermon is short, the manner of delivering it without eloquence or fervour. The St. Petersburg preacher, moreover, propped his head sometimes on his right, sometimes on his left hand, and sometimes on both together, which would have looked indecorous in a coffee-house, but in the pulpit, and from a preacher, was in the highest degree improper and offensive. The English clerk, who sits under the pulpit, constantly repeats certain words of the preacher in such a journeyman-like fashion, and in so nasal and trumpeting a tone, that it is really difficult to keep properly in view the gravity of the occasion, and not to be unduly excited by the very comic effect. It is strange also, and beneath the dignity of the preacher, to leave his seat so often during the prayers, and appear now here and now there, now at the altar, and now in his desk.

There are several German Lutheran churches in St. Petersburg, but they would not be sufficient to contain the 40,000 German protestants there settled, if they were as zealous church-goers there as in their native land. The church of St. Anne is the most important; the preachers appear much too fine in the pulpit, covered as they are with orders, whose gay colours form a glaring contrast with their black gowns. There is also a great deal of luxury and ostentation among the German congregations. One day I found St. Anne's church all hung with black, the pulpit decked with crape, before the altar several tapers were burning as in the Greek churches, and in the midst was placed a coffin covered with silver, and before the door, carriages, some with two, some with four



horses, and a whole chorus of black muffled torch-bearers. In great astonishment I asked what German prince had died here. It is the confectioner K—, of Vassili Ostroff, was the answer! We forgive luxury and ostentation in princes and nobles much more readily than in upstarts and mechanics, because to those born in the purple, it comes as something of course; they fancy it cannot be otherwise. But the others have a bad conscience in their proceedings, hide it but indifferently, and may be said to invade the rights of the public.

In a foreign land, even the most insignificant appearance has an unusual interest, and if we bestow little attention on a fruit-tree in a garden, we examine it more closely by a hermitage, or in a wilderness. Such a fruit-tree is the small brotherhood of Herrnbuters in St. Petersburg. Their small adorned house of prayer is at the end of Isaac's-street, and is entered through a light, cheerful court. There are very few of them; not more than fifty brothers, it is said, form the centre of this congregation; but the reputation of their piety, and the eloquence of their preachers, has spread so far, that on every holiday many persons assemble here, high and low, Germans, Russians, Poles, and French. The church is always so full that the people press up to the open windows to take part in the service, and the pastor opens the doors of his adjoining apartments to find places for the congregation.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE SERVANTS OF ST. PETERSBURG.

FROM very ancient times the Russian nobles have divided their serfs into two classes: the agricultural peasants who live on the estates and cultivate the soil, and the so-called "Dvorniye Liudi," who are chosen for the personal service of the lord, as footmen, gardeners, coachmen, and others. These servants soon obtained certain advantages; were not used to dig the soil, and not given up for military service. As they were no better fed in their lord's house than in their own, had their own bread and kwas to provide, to be content with what remained from their lord's table, and as they had rarely any other clothing than that worn on the paternal dunghill, such servants cost very little to keep, and whole companies of stable-boys, stove-heaters, scullions, lamplighters, couriers, table-coverers, and housemaids, were easily admitted into a household. These thorough old Russian servants, who, with their shoes of lime-bark, and sheepskin cloaks, formed a strange contrast to the palaces they lived in, where they slept on the stoves in the kitchen, or on the chairs and floors of the rooms, are still to be met with in country houses in the interior. Even in many houses in Moscow and St. Petersburg (generally in those of the poorer nobles) the lower offices of the household are still filled by these serf servants, who are provided perhaps with a better caftan and boots, but after serving for a time in the kitchen or the stable, are dismissed to their fields again. These people differ too little from the rest of the peasants to form a class apart.



The observation which the masters soon made, that their own serfs were much idler, slower, and more perverse in service than those who worked for hire, the increasing wants of a newly-civilized capital, and of luxury growing with the growth of the empire, have called forth a numerous class of ministering spirits, consisting of natives of all nations, and of the most various relations in life, the study of which is one of the most interesting that a capital can offer to the ethnograph or psychologist.\* By far the larger part are those members of the superfluous population of the estates, who are not wanted for the cultivation of the soil, and whom their lords have permitted to seek their fortune in the towns. They are furnished with a pass or permit, which runs thus: "I permit my *krepostnoi tshelovek* (serf) Jephim,—on payment of a yearly sum of sixty, seventy, eighty rubles (as the case may be) which he is to transmit half-yearly,—to seek his livelihood in any way, in any town or village of the Russian empire, for so many years until it be my pleasure to call him back to my estate, X., where he is registered." The serfs thus manumitted for a time, come to the cities and engage in various occupations, in hotels, coffee-houses, manufactories, and in wealthy private families, where, however, those entirely free are preferred, on account of the dependence of the former on another master, by whom they are continually liable to be recalled. It is curious to see with what inconceivable adroitness and rapidity these people from the plough accommodate themselves to their new position. They come up raw and unfashioned from the sheepfold, stumble over the floors of the sitting-rooms, and scarcely know how to place a table against the wall. In a few months they are coxcombs in gay liveries, exhaling perfume, dancing on the smoothest polished floor with the waiting-maids, and assisting their masters into their carriages with the grace of a court page.

An immense number of servants are recruited from the army. These poor fellows, when they are dismissed after their twenty or twenty-five years' service, have commonly forgotten during that time any mechanical art whereby they might live, have lost their relations by death, and their former masters by having served as soldiers, for the emperor's service sets them free from all other. On the other hand, as *Dentshuks* (servants) to so many officers, they have learned to obey to admiration, and, therefore, naturally seek employment to attend on single gentlemen, or as porters, messengers, or watchmen in public institutions. For the latter purpose, they are generally preferred to all others, for which reason they are met with in numbers at all hospitals, poor-houses, theatres, at the exchanges, and in the schools as door-keepers, waiters, &c., in their old worn uniforms, and a whole series of medals and crosses on their breasts. If any master desire a being who has absolutely no will of his own, who is ready to devote all his powers of mind and body to his service, who is yielding, submissive, and patient enough to bear all his whims and humours, even his anger and injustice, without a murmur; in a word, if any one wish for the very ideal of a servant, who will bear his master, as it were, upon his hands, go through fire and water for him without complaint, who neither sleeps nor wakes without permission, nor eats nor drinks but at command, who makes no other answer, and has no other thought, on the receipt of any

\* According to the statistical returns, there are not less than 85,000 of such attendant spirits in St. Petersburg.

possible order or commission but "slushu" (I obey), let him at once engage a Russian dentshuk, who, after he has endured the fiery ordeal of twenty years' service as a Russian soldier, and learnt suppleness by countless punishments, will find the hardest place mild and easy. It is not possible that one who loves to rule could find a softer cushion whereon to lean than such a dentshuk—so good-tempered, so obliging, so unwearied, so attentive and obsequious as never other man can be, unless we could unbrutify our faithful dog, and breathe his devoted spirit into a speaking, living human form.

After these three classes of Russian servants, the Germans are the most numerous in St. Petersburg, then the Finlanders, Esthonians, and Lettes. The French and Tartars fill only particular offices, but these almost exclusively. The English of this class are the fewest, and they, too, seem to appropriate some particular posts. To describe this division of employment by *nations*, it will be necessary to mention the different charges and offices in a Russian house more in detail. A review of this kind is, besides, well calculated to throw light upon the domestic life of Russia, as it characterizes not only the generally-overlooked class of servants, but in many respects their masters also.

A fully-appointed house of the first class in Russia, without mentioning the numerous resident relations, old aunts, cousins, adopted children, &c., without mentioning the educational staff, the German, French, and Russian masters, tutors and governesses, the family physician, companions and others, who, as *majorum gentium*, must of course be excluded, has so astounding a number of serving-folk of one kind or another, that the like is to be found in no other country in the world. The following may be named as never wanting in the list: the superintendent of accounts, the secretary, the dworezki or maître d'hôtel, the valets of the lord, the valets of the lady, the dyätka or overseer of the children, the footmen, the buffetshek or butler and his adjuncts, the table-decker, the head groom, the coachman and postilions of the lord, and the coachman and postilions of the lady, the attendants on the sons of the house and their tutors, the porter, the head cook and his assistant, the baker and the confectioner, the whole body of mushiks or servants *minimarum gentium*, the stove-heater, kwas brewer, the waiting-maids, and wardrobe-keeper of the lady, the waiting-maids of the grown-up daughters and of the governesses, the nurses in and past service and their under-nurses, and, when a private band is maintained, the Russian kapellmeister and the musicians.

If all these places are filled with free people, it may be easily supposed that the maintenance of such a household is no trifle in a city where wages are extravagantly high. The servants of the first-class, such as the maître d'hôtel, valets de chambre, and the furniture-keeper, generally have as much as 1000 rubles a year; the head-cook, if a Frenchman, 2000, and sometimes more; the coachman and footmen 30 to 50 rubles monthly; the foreign waiting women 60 to 80 monthly; and even the lowest of the house servants from 20 to 30, also monthly. Many of these posts are to be filled on each of the twenty estates that the family may possess under every meridian and parallel; besides the army of stewards, gardeners, Saxon shepherds, miners, commissaries, pensioned servants, &c., who are all to be overlooked and paid from St. Petersburg, the principal residence of the family. For the receipt and payment of money, and the management of the correspondence connected with it, some of the Russian grandees have almost as much counting-house business as a merchant in a considerable

way of business. From these counting-houses the servants receive their wages, the pensioners of the family their allowance, and the heads of the house themselves the money for their personal expenses. The head of the financial department—often an intimate friend, or near relation of the family—lays at times an account before the chief, of the hundreds of thousands which he has received from the gold and platina mines of the Ural mountains, from the corn-fields of Moscow, the vineyards of the Crimea and Caucasus, for the wool and tallow from the herds and flocks on the Steppes, or from the salt-mines of Biarmia; and of the hundreds of thousands he has paid for sturgeons and pine-apples, bonnes, lackeys, and chambermaids.

The dvorezki, who is considered as the head of the whole tribe of serving-men, and who generally possesses the full confidence of his lord and lady, is usually a Russian, has entered the house a boy, and risen by degrees to his important post. Of course he is a great man in the eyes of the other servants, most of whom he retains or dismisses at his pleasure; and as keeper of the keys to all the stores of the house, all pay their court to him, and even the foreign waiting-maids dare not refuse him at Easter the "Christohs woskress" and the attendant salute.

Of valets and footmen there are often from twelve to twenty in one house, and as they are paraded more than any other before the eyes of the public, the youngest and best-looking men are always picked out. They are dressed with great elegance, and have one livery for the house and another for the promenade—a state livery for balls and visits at court, where they are glorious in velvet and silk, and a mourning suit for the deaths that in families so extensively connected are of frequent occurrence. All these gentry are the supplest, most adroit fellows in the world—born Figaros—and in their manner, and in their very courteous and dancing-master-like demeanour, leave the lackeys of other countries far behind. They are generally great draughts and chess players, and, with the little capital amassed from their wages, often carry on small money speculations within the house itself, where from time to time ready money is at a premium.

There are no hussars and jägers in a Russian household, but Cossacks and Circassians in their national costume are numerous; and Albanians, Servians, and Armenians are also sometimes seen in their rich native dresses; nor are even negroes wanting in this rendezvous of nations. The dätka, or overseer of the little boys of the family, is an attendant rarely wanting in a Russian house. Very often he is some veteran soldier, who takes upon himself to meddle a little with education. As this branch of service is very well paid, better qualified persons sometimes pursue it. He is to the boys what the bonnes are to the girls. He carries them about, takes them out to walk, tends them in sickness; and it is really admirable to see the patience of these old child-loving veterans with their spoiled charges.

Some families take a pride in having the whole service of the house performed by French domestics, and some have among the first class of attendants, Germans, Swedes, and even Polish Shlakhtitzi (inferior nobles); but in the stables, and all thereunto belonging, all are national, oriental, and long-bearded. A Tartar coachman is the most fashionable. It is plain that the whole form and essence of the Russian equipage is of Mongul-Tartar origin; the numerous technical Tartar words in use may be cited in proof of this. According to a Russian's belief, this kind of equipage is so fit and proper that he would not exchange it for any



other; in fact it is so generally liked, that in St. Petersburg it is adopted by all nations, the English excepted, whilst in other points it is the Russians who adopt foreign modes.

The coachman, therefore, and certainly not to his disadvantage, clothes himself in the old national dress. A fine blue cloth caftan, fastened under the left arm with three silver buttons, and girded round his middle by a coloured silk sash, invests his upper man strait and tightly, leaving the handsome throat bare, and falling in long, rich folds over the lower limbs. On his head he wears a high four-cornered cap, covered with some costly fur, and a handsome bushy beard falls like a rich bordering of fur over his breast. The carriage of the man is worthy of his picturesque costume; both he and his horses seem to be conscious that they are admired. The postilions, clad like the coachman, are pretty boys, from twelve to fourteen years of age. This is a great point; long lads of sixteen or eighteen on the leaders would offend every Russian eye. As no person of rank, in the majority of the Russian cities, ever drives with less than four horses; as not only the master of the family, but the mistress also has a coach-and-four for her own use, while in some there is another carriage for the children; the number of horses and drivers in many private establishments may be easily imagined; their studs often emulate those of princes.

The most celebrated Russian coachman, who, although a common bearded Russ, is become almost an historical personage, was Ilia, the coachman of the Emperor Alexander. He served the emperor, faithful as his shadow, for thirty years, and was much in favour with him from his experience and originality of character. He accompanied the czar in all his travels, and is therefore a well known person, not only at all the hundred thousand post stations of the Russian dominions, but throughout the capitals of Europe. He adhered to his master even in death, and slept, during the whole journey, wrapt in his furs, under the hearse that brought the imperial corpse from Taganrog to St. Petersburg. As during the life time of Alexander, Ilia was often alone with him, the words spoken from the box into the carriage were not without weight, and many a courtier tried, with very little reserve, to gain the favour of the witty coachman. He now lives, rewarded with the rank of a counsellor of state, in a palace in St. Petersburg, where he gives entertainments to his friends and kindred, and relates anecdotes of the deceased emperor.

In the kitchen department—no insignificant one any where, but least of all in Russia, all is French, or Frenchified. The majority of the Russian nobles are quite happy when they can find a Frenchman who, for some 2000 or 3000 rubles yearly, will have the goodness to direct their kitchens, and to whose humours and caprices they are willing in return to accommodate themselves. "We poor fellows," said a Russian cook to me once, "if we do not do every thing properly it's *v'polizie* (to the police) directly, or *v'Slibir* (to Siberia), *palki nada* (stripes are wanted here)! But if a French cook is found fault with for spoiling a dish, he answers, "No one need mind eating that. It is not nice perhaps, but it is wholesome."

These cooks, who are very great gentlemen, and drive to market in elegant equipages, make out most incredible bills. In some houses the cost of the table amounts to some hundreds of thousands of rubles.



Many people have found it advisable to make an arrangement with the cook to furnish the dinner at so much a head. Ten rubles is an average sum. On extraordinary occasions it will be fifty, a hundred, and even more. The hospitality maintained in some of the houses, where every day a number of strangers find their places at the host's table, is not therefore quite so cheap as some travellers represent it.

St. Petersburg is the high school for all the cooks of the empire. Every noble of the interior has a number of young men, *en pension*, in the kitchens of the great houses in St. Petersburg, who are to return accomplished cooks; and a family from the capital removing into the interior with the whole corps of Frenchified servants, soon have their kitchen swarming with a multitude of candidates striving to acquire new and piquant recipes from the initiated.

Although there is a post-office in St. Petersburg, there are still so many commissions to be executed in a great house which do not fall exactly within any one's department, that it is thought necessary to keep a "house courier" 'to drive out every morning, noon, and evening, to deliver letters, parcels, and so forth. The merchants on Vassili Ostroff have a similar figurant in their houses to carry out letters and money, whom they call "Artelshtshik." He is generally a long-bearded Russ, and by virtue of his beard a trustworthy man, for he is often employed to carry hundreds of thousands, without any uneasiness being felt for their safety. When we consider the numbers already mentioned, the servants, and the servants' servants, and that many of them are married, and live in the house with all their *et cætera*, it will be admitted that a Russian house must be tolerably well filled, and swarming in every corner. The whole of the lower regions is commonly given up to them, where they pack themselves as well as they can with bag and baggage, home-made furniture, and household utensils, not forgetting the pictures of saints, and their everlasting lamps.

Yet it is well known that a Russian nobleman, in spite of his train of servants, or perhaps because of his train of servants, is very badly served. As no one will do what is "not in his place," a commission has a vast number of hands to go through before it is executed. A valet is asked for a glass of water, he tells a footman, who calls to a scullion; he is found sleeping about somewhere, and after a long search after a decanter, runs to the spring, and the water comes, perhaps, at last, when his master is no longer thirsty. "Sluga! pasluish!" (Here, servant, here), is called from a door. "Sei tshas! sei tshas! sei minut!" (Directly, directly, this minute), is answered from above and below, from staircase and courtyard. The caller waits a quarter of an hour, but no one comes; for Paul supposes that Ivan is gone, and Matwei knows that Vanka heard as well as he. The call is repeated. "Sluga pasluishi," and "Sei tshas," is echoed back, but no servant comes; and a hundred times a day a man may be convinced of the truth of the Russian proverb, which says, "Sei tshas" means to-morrow morning, and "Sei minut" this day week. Yet they fancy there is no doing without a retinue of servants.

"Ah! you really embarrass me with your kind visit," said Prince N—to a friend who came unexpectedly to dine with him. "I must apologize to you, for you will be very badly attended to. One-half of my servants are gone hunting with my son; I have sent out some on business myself,

and my good mother, who has driven out of town to pay a visit, has taken away nearly all the rest." Nevertheless, there were five diligent pair of hands to wait on twelve persons.

It is singular that the male servants should be much more numerous than the female. Generally the rooms are swept and the beds made by men, and the ladies, in addition to their waiting-maids, have a chamberlain who attends them every where. The waiting damsels are of all nations: arch Parisian grisettes; Swiss maidens pining with home sickness; Swedes from Stockholm come to seek a better fortune, *i. e.* more money; German Amalias, or Matildas, who write sentimental verses; Russian Sofinkas or Olgas, very discontented at the number of foreigners they see preferred to themselves; and over all this *pot pourri* of nationality, the same Russian sauce is poured. They speak a jargon half Russian, half French, garnished with many other words from many other languages; they must dress gaily and fashionably to please their mistresses, try to make themselves agreeable, and fall in with the prevailing tone.

The nurses occupy a remarkable position in Russia, the same or nearly so that they do with all the Caucasian nations, among whom the nurse remains often for life, the friend and adviser of her foster-child, and where a noble or princely house is sure to contain a whole chorus of nurses, as well those of the grown up, as of the younger children, and of the master and mistress of the family. So long as she remains in the house, the nurse is always an object of distinguished regard to all her housemates; she is flattered and spoiled on all sides, and as every tiling is done to please her for the sake of the child, she seldom fails to turn out a very capricious, bold, obtrusive, and particularly well-fed person. Intrusted with the mother's costliest treasure, the nurse accompanies her lady every where,—to church, to the promenade, to the boudoir, and in the carriage. As these nurses are peasant-women who have not laid aside the habits of their homes, and yet whose places demand a certain richness of dress, the national female costume is seen in them in its fullest splendour, as the male costume is with the coachmen. The Russian nurses are seen on the public walks in rich gold brocaded stuffs, and high kakoshniks of false and real pearls on their head; the joyous look, the red cheeks of these gaudy peacocks, the boldness and assurance of their demeanour, explain at once the relation in which they stand. Long after their period of service has expired, they receive abundance of presents from the family, whose favour is extended also to the foster-children. Something of superstition is mingled with this kindness, as in almost every custom of the Russians, for they ascribe to the nurse and her children all manner of mysterious influence over the nursling.

The Germans resident in Russia relate terrible stories of these Russian nurses. Their childlike gaiety and humour fit them peculiarly for sport and merriment with children; but on the other hand, when they get out of patience, they have recourse to the most barbarous and inhuman means to quiet their noisy little charges. For instance, striking them on the head till they are stupified, holding them by the feet with their heads downwards till the blood mounts to the head, and shaking them so violently as to throw them into convulsions, besides frightening the elder children by dressing themselves up as ghosts. Other tricks so detestable have been attributed to them, that they will not bear repetition. A lady who had had a Russian nurse told me frightful stories of what she had endured

from her, and seemed to think it little short of a miracle, that she had escaped with so much health and understanding after such treatment. The following anecdote is not the only one of the kind I have heard in St. Petersburg. A family of rank came to St. Petersburg from Moscow on business. Going one day to pay a visit in the city, they left their daughter, a child five years of age, at home with her nurse. On their return in the evening the half-intoxicated nurse fell at their feet shedding a torrent of tears, and exclaiming, "Pamilituye, vuinovat, vuinovat" (Have compassion on me, I am guilty, I am guilty)! and told them how she had left the child a few minutes alone, and that when she came back it was nowhere to be found, it had been stolen. The despairing parents made every possible search but in vain, and were at length compelled to return childless to Moscow. The nurse appeared so wretched that she was forgiven. About three years afterwards the father came again to St. Petersburg, and while passing one day through the streets, thinking of his lost Anninka, he heard a feeble voice crying out, "Papinka, papinka" (Papa, papa)! He turned and saw his little daughter muffled in rags, miserable and sickly, sitting in a cart drawn by a filthy beggar-woman. "Woman, where did you get that child?" cried he, seizing her and snatching the child who sunk sobbing and half-naked in his arms. On examination, it appeared that the beggar had bought the poor little creature from the nurse for 20 rubles, and reduced her to the state in which she was found, purposely to excite compassion. Begging is no longer permitted by the police, and such things are now more likely to happen in London or Paris than in St. Petersburg.

In many wealthy families a good music master is often retained, and in some, particularly in the provinces, a private band. In fact, it is easy enough for a nobleman to get one together, his peasants are always at hand, and learn as easily to play on the violin as to clean his boots. It is only necessary to have a German musician in the house, which is indeed somewhat expensive, and to let him tutor them for a time, till a band is formed, and then at a ball, or any such occasion, the lord has only to muster the stove-heaters and superfluous table-deckers to have a very tolerable orchestra. Here and there, where the taste is more refined, three or four well-paid German musicians will be found on the establishment; but this is rare, and so are the private horn-bands, which foreigners on their first arrival at St. Petersburg seem to expect to hear from every house.

On some of the estates schools have been established, where a select number of peasant-youths are taught reading, writing, &c., in order to render them serviceable afterwards, as gardeners and bailiffs, or in St. Petersburg as grooms of the chamber and secretaries. These youths bring with them the capacity for further improvement. Many of them acquire the arts of reading and writing, they themselves scarcely know how, and even the little postilions may often be seen in a corner of the stables diligently forming the letters with their frozen fingers. Nothing can excite the surprise of a stranger, more than the extraordinary passion for reading now prevalent among servants in Russia. The greater part of the antechambers of the nobles, where there are always a number of servants assembled, are regular reading-rooms; those who are not playing at draughts, the favourite game, are generally reading. It is no rare thing to see six or eight in different corners thus engaged; and if their occupa-

tion strikes a foreigner, who expects nothing but laziness and barbarism, with admiration, as indicative of advancing civilization, his admiration will rise to astonishment if he give himself the trouble of inquiring into the nature of their studies. A Translation of Bourrienne's *Memoires*, Karamsin's *History of Russia*, the *Fables* of Kruiloff, the *Novels* of Prince Odojevsky, the *Tales* of Baron Brambäres, Bantysh Kamensky's *History of Lesser Russia*, Polevoy's *Outlines of the History of the World*, a translation of the *Æneid*, and others of the same kind, are the works he will find. I know not whether our domestics have yet risen to Luden's *History of the Germans*, or Raumer's *Hohenstaufen*?

It is worthy of remark, that the young literature of Russia, which has already produced much that is excellent, as yet entirely unknown to us, has hitherto thrown off none of a base and spurious kind. That with the good much that is worthless exists, is undeniable, particularly in the scientific branches, where all is good for nothing; but as it was calculated for the educated classes, it contains nothing vulgar, insipid, or common. The servants, and such of the lower classes as are more and more becoming readers, are compelled to satisfy their literary appetite with wholesome food. Their taste will refine itself in consequence, and enough has already been written in Russia to keep a zealous reader in breath. Circulating libraries abound in St. Petersburg. In the provinces, of course, it is more difficult to obtain books, and there, many really touching examples of the literary yearnings of the people are related. I knew an old chamberlain, who in his leisure hours had learned Kruiloff's *Fables* by heart, and had read Karamsin's *History of Russia*, six times through, because he could get no other books. All that is written about Napoleon among us, is translated directly into Russian, and read by all classes, in the antechambers particularly, with uncommon ardour.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE MONUMENTS.

IT is remarkable that neither Vienna, nor Berlin, nor London, nor Paris, cities which for centuries have been the centres of a stirring national life, and the theatres of many extraordinary events, operating powerfully on the humanity of the middle ages as on our own, can vie with young un-historical St. Petersburg in the number of their historical monuments. The most numerous, and in some measure the grandest, monuments of modern times, at least according to the plan laid down for their execution, have been erected in St. Petersburg.

Rocks, columns, obelisks, statues, triumphal arches, have been brought within her gates, and such magnificent positions and accessories appointed, as have seldom fallen to the lot of monuments. No pains or expense is spared on the fit arrangement of those memorials, the best artists have



been consulted on the plans, drawing, and placing of them. Nevertheless, scarcely one has escaped some arch-blunder, which strikes every spectator at once, and yet escaped the notice of the many founders and rearers who reflected so long and so deeply about the matter.

The largest and most interesting monuments of St. Petersburg, are the Alexander Pillar, Peter's Rock, the Rumanzoff Obelisk, the statues of Kutusoff, Barclay de Tolly, and Suvaroff, the equestrian statue of Peter the Great, and the Triumphal Arch.\*

When we examine the list of Russian monuments, it is not a little striking, that far more have been raised to distinguished subjects than to the emperors themselves. Contrary to the practice of the Roman emperors, and of so many ancient and modern princes, the Russian emperors have shown a great disinclination to the erection of monuments in their own honour during their lifetime, and keeping themselves in the background, they have put their subjects forward. The only monarch who has yet been honoured with statues is Peter the Great. Even the proud and vain Catherine has no memorial to her honour, either in the capital or elsewhere. The greater part of the Russian monuments refer to the three chief epochs of their history; to the period of the elevation of the Romanoffs and the shaking off the Polish yoke; (to them the memorials of Minin, Posharski, and some others, are devoted;) to the time of Peter the Great, and the reduction of the Swedish power; and to the time of the struggle with the French Revolution and Napoleon, or rather against the whole of Western Europe, to which belong the Pyramids of Boradino, the Goddess of Victory, at Riga, the Alexander Column, and the statues of a number of generals.

So much has been written in newspapers and books of travels of the Rock of Peter and Alexander's Pillar, that in spite of their size they might be literally buried under the load of praise and blame already bestowed, yet every one finds something new in them to laud or find fault with. Among trifling objections, the first to be made is to the inscription, "*Petro Primo, Catherina Secunda*," or in Russian, equally short, "*Petramu Pervomu, Catherina Vtovaya*." It is chiselled on the two long sides of the rock. To us, it seemed, decidedly, the proper place would have been in front, for every thing should have its inscription conspicuously on its forehead. We do not indicate the intent of a building on the wings, but as a frontispiece over the chief entrance. Enormous is the vanity displayed in this inscription. The allusion contained in the opposition of "the first" and "the second" is easily comprehended, when we bear in mind that Catherine always looked on herself as the finisher of what Peter had begun. By this inscription, she not only places herself on a level with Peter, but above him as a judge, a goddess to acknowledge and reward merit. But this is easier forgotten than the bad treatment which the rock on which the statue stands has experienced. The idea of a rider springing up a rock, on both sides of which steep precipices threaten destruction, and of representing him at the moment when he has reached

\* The passion for monuments has gained the complete mastery over the Russians. By searching in their history, a number of remarkable men and events have been found which are held worthy of monuments. Witness the Pyramids on the battle-field of Boradino, the Column at Pultava, the Goddess of Victory, in Riga, for 1813, the statues of Prince Posharski and the citizen Minin in Moscow, and several monuments in Zarskoye Selo, and some other places.

the summit, and victoriously contemplates the land beyond, is as poetical and grand a one as ever was breathed by a sculptor on his work, and it were difficult not to find the parade-stepping horses in our equestrian statues of princes, feeble and sleepy, after seeing Peter galloping on his rock.

The emperor's face is turned towards the Neva, his hand outstretched as if he would grasp land and water, at once ruling and blessing. This idea was fine, bold, and amply sufficient; and it is therefore inconceivable why the artist did not rest contented with it, and why to the rock-climbing he has superadded the subduing of a serpent, which the emperor encounters on the rock, and which is trodden under his horse's hoof. The great rule of art, the unity of idea and action, is sinned against; and it is almost impossible to sympathize at the same moment with the emperor's joy at the wide prospect from the surmounted rock, and with his effort in overcoming the dragon. St. George, in his fight with the dragon, is wholly employed in his work, has his eyes riveted to the devouring monster, and aims with his unerring lance at the head; he has clearly no leisure to enjoy the prospect from the mountain. Peter's dragon is not threatening, but crawls like a slow worm, as if accidentally, over the path, where, accidentally also, the horse sets his foot on him; or does the artist mean us to understand that Peter, like a skilful horseman, causes him so to plant his hoof? Peter then does too much if he is blessing in the front and fighting in the rear: moreover, the issue of the fight is very uncertain. St. George's sharp, bright weapon threatens not in vain; and if he pierce the creature's head, it is fixed to the ground for ever. But it is extremely improbable that the passing kick from the horse's hoof should put an end to the serpent at once. This incident disturbs the effect, but only in some measure; for the artist has felt that the two ideas were not very reconcileable, and has therefore voluntarily, or involuntarily, made the one predominant. The serpent is so small, and Peter, who, like Columbus, looking far beyond, with head and hand upraised, cries "Land! land!" or rather, "Water! water!" on beholding the Neva and the longed-for sea, seems to trouble himself so little about the animal, that it may be overlooked, or might be filed away to restore the unity. Perhaps the artist placed it here, only to obtain, by one of its contortions, a point of support for the horse. The animal springs forward quite freely in the air, and rests behind on three points, the two hind-legs and the tail, which apparently only just touches the serpent, but is in reality strongly fastened to it; it is pillar, prop, and cramp-iron.

The bold air-borne position of the whole statue rendered necessary some particular precautions to preserve the centre of gravity. The thickness of the bronze in front is therefore very trifling, only a few lines, but behind it increases to several inches: 10,000 pounds weight of iron is likewise cast in the hind-quarters and tail of the horse—a tolerable aplomb! The spring of the horse, the carriage of the rider, his well-chosen old Russian costume, are above all blame. But the treatment the rocky pedestal has undergone is terrible; and here the artist's proceeding is quite incomprehensible. This wonderfully fine block, which may have been torn by the Deluge from the Swedish mountains, was found in the morass of St. Petersburg in one piece, 45 feet long, 30 high, and 25 in width. Seldom have the Titans been so obliging as to loosen so magnificent a mass from its primeval rock, and deposit it in the neighbourhood of an imperial city. The hint was only half understood. Vulcan himself had sent it away,

Neptune bore it hither on his crystal waves, and Jupiter wrought it with his lightning,—its marks were yet apparent on the surface. As it was, it offered the noblest pedestal for a statue of Peter the Great: they should even have hesitated to remove the stains and moss that Flora had planted on it. But, far from this observance, the chisel was set to work after the lightning. They censured and criticised, and turned and scraped, till the rock became so attenuated that the same thing occurred as befel the child with his scraped lion, in Gellert's fable—it broke in two. The two pieces were patched together, and it now looks as unnatural as the imitation rocks we see upon the stage. Some work may have been necessary on the brow of the stone to make a footing for the horse; but it is certain it was not done with due precaution, and the value of the block is injured three-fold by depriving it of a third of its size. It is now only 14 feet high, 20 broad, and 35 feet long. What is more remarkable is, that they did not begin to break it till after they had, with unspeakable labour, brought hither the whole mass, and built a ship and a road for the purpose!

Peter's statue stands in the centre of the city he created, but not, unfortunately, in the centre of the noble place it adorns. They have hit the point better with the Alexander pillar. Before the chief front of the Winter Palace the vast edifice of the Generalty expands its enormous bow, to which the strait line of the palace front forms the string. Between the bow and the string, at a like distance from either, the stately column rears itself. It is the greatest monolith raised in modern times—above 80 feet in height, and, with the angel on its summit, and the cubic block that supports it, 150 feet. The eye is delighted with the slender form of this giant; it is highly polished, and reflects the outlines of the surrounding buildings in its cylindrical mirror. In any other city its enormous size would make a greater impression. Here in St. Petersburg, where the eye expands with the vast surrounding spaces, it is seen under a smaller angle of vision. The place in which it stands is so vast in its dimensions, the houses around are so high and massive, that even this giant requires its whole hundred and eighty feet not to disappear. But when we approach and become aware of its circumference, while its head seems to reach the heavens, the impression is strong and overpowering. The best points of view are the gateways of the Generalty and the Winter Palace; from them it is contemplated as in a frame, and a point of measurement gained for the eye by which the height may be estimated. It is incomprehensible why the crown of the pillar has been made so wide and heavy. It extends so far over the shaft that the large angel with the cross is not to be seen from beneath, and might as well not be there. To look at it properly we must ascend the second story of the Palace, or go the distance of a verst on the Admiralty Place to observe it thence with a telescope. The thick-headedness of the pillar injures the effect of the height. This can be proved by a little experiment under the arch of the Palace. Place yourself so that the arch hides the top of the pillar, and it appears enormous: step forward, and let the thick head of it come in sight, and it looks as if it had fallen on it and was pressing the column down, whereas it ought to raise it. The worst of all is, that already an abominable worm Is gnawing at this beautiful and still so new monolith. It has already received a very sad and offensive rent from above towards the middle. It may be that the stone was at first badly chosen, or that the cold of St. Petersburg will not tolerate such monuments of human art. There are



people in St. Petersburg who hold it for a patriotic duty to deny the existence of the rent, which has been artfully filled with a cement of granite fragments. But in the sunshine, when the polish of the rent shows differently from that of the stone; or in the winter, when the hoar-frost forms in icicles on the cold stone, but not on the warmer cement, the wicked line is but too apparent.\*

The idea of this column is, like every thing else in Russia, religious-political. It was erected in honour of the Emperor Alexander, and is meant to eternalize, with his memory, that of the re-confirmation of the political constitution and of the security of religion. The attack of the irreligious, unbelieving Napoleon, is considered in Russia, not only as an attack on the state, but also as one on the faith. Hence the erection of the angel with the cross on the summit. This column, whose capital and ornaments on the pedestal were formed from Turkish cannon, throws into one category all the enemies of Russia, the Turks, the French, &c., and is the sealing, ratification, and immortalization of all the modern victories of the Russian eagle. Till the present time this monument is the summit of Russian glory. God knows what catastrophe will next give occasion to surpass those 150 feet. Will the inscription on the next monument run thus? "The victorious Slavonian nations, united under the Russian sceptre, erected this monument in gratitude for the conquest of the German races whose century of injustice has been at last atoned for, the dominions wrested from the Slavonians having been again incorporated with the Slavonian empire."

Some people maintain that the Russian eagle has long brooded over the project of such an inscription, and that the embryo is already formed in the egg. Only the date of the year is yet wanting. The memorial in the worst taste is that to Field-marshal Romanzoff, for his victories over the Turks, with the inscription "*Romantzowa pobaedam*" (To the victories of Romanzoff). The Russian language is capable of the conciseness of the Latin. This monument is composed of half-a-dozen different-coloured stones, and is ornamented with patches of metal besides. The obelisk itself is of black granite. It stands in a socket of red marble, whose base is of another colour, in addition to which there are several strata of white marble; and the whole bears on its extreme point a golden ball, with an eagle hovering over it. In vain we ask what harmony the artist could find in all these various colours and materials. Fortunately this artistical abortion will not last long. There are already several rents and splits in it, and so many pieces broken from all corners, that it looks as if it had stood for centuries. It will soon sink under its own weight. The eight Egyptian Sphinxes, which lie not far from this monument before the Academy of Art, seem to look deridingly on the unimposing obelisk. In defiance of the thousand years of warlike tumult—in defiance of the countless burning suns, of the endless series of days and nights that have passed over their heads—they look as youthful as if newly born; their skin as smooth and polished as when they came from the chisel.

If ever a Russian commander deserved a monument it was Suvaroff, who, as is well known, was a man of genius and an original, but who was also, what is not so well known, a wit and a good-hearted man. He has got the feeblest and worst of all. Certainly if Suvaroff could see his

\* See note at page 8.



own statue he would make many an epigram upon it. It is a bronze statue, on foot, wielding a sword in the right-hand and holding a shield in the left, in defence over a few crowns—those of the Pope, Naples, and Sardinia. The crowns lie at his feet, on the pedestal of the statue. The position of the figure is that of a fencing-master, who has just quietly drawn, and is about to show his pupil a thrust. The costume is Roman, and the whole so small that it is quite lost on the field of Mars, where it stands. The daily drumming and clash of arms that Suvaroff must listen to here are the only things about the place that can be pleasing to him.

What have people elsewhere, that St. Petersburg should not have? Egypt had its obelisks. St. Petersburg has hers also. Paris and Rome are adorned with columns and triumphant arches; so is St. Petersburg; there are two triumphant arches there already. They span the two roads which connect the city with her most important territories; the one, the road to Riga, leading to the West of Europe, the other, the Moscow road, leading to the heart of the empire. The former was raised by the city in honour of the Emperor Alexander when he returned in triumph from Paris, the latter was built by the Emperor Nicholas. The first is called "Triumphalnaya Vorota," or, by the people who know nothing about triumphs, "Triugolnaya" (The three-angled gate). It is built after the Roman model, but overladen with inscriptions and a multitude of statues in niches, of old Russian warriors. On the platform of the gate the goddess of victory, in a car drawn by four horses, gallops to meet the advancing emperor, and bestow on him a laurel crown. On the return of the emperor, it was only in plaster and wood, and was afterwards executed in stone and metal. The car has really but four horses, and not five, like the quadriga of Mars on the Hotel de l'Etat Major. They say that four horses would not have sufficiently filled the space, and therefore a fifth was added, to give greater size and effect to the mass.

Thus, every fine monument in St. Petersburg, with peculiar beauties, has also peculiar faults. One of its mythological groups has, contrary to every rule of art, a horse too much; the second is faulty in design, the third is broken up and spoiled in the execution, the fourth has a huge split, and another in scarcely the fortieth year of its existence threatens to become a heap of ruins and rubbish. What will remain for posterity? These are our modern cities! In the time of her glory, Rome boasted other monuments than these! Her stately ruins prove it after a lapse of two thousand years.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE ARSENALS.

AT no time are the streets of St. Petersburg wanting in soldiers and military processions; but most uninterruptedly and diligently is the rush and roll of drums and flag, and the steady tramp of the military in the streets of that part of the city called by the Russians Liteinaya, which the troops must pass through on entering the city from the Viborg side,

over Sunday bridge, and which moreover contains a number of military institutions; the barracks and stables for the artillery, and the two arsenals, the new, and the old. The old arsenal, an enormous building, was erected by Count Orloff at his own cost, and presented to the Empress Catherine.\* The new one was built by the Emperor Alexander, in a very magnificent style. Both are filled with glittering weapons, trophies, old military engines, and antiquities of importance in Russian history. A short account of them will not be uninteresting to the reader, particularly as this subject has been much neglected in the different works on St. Petersburg, which is the more remarkable as every thing here is open to every body.

The endless ranges of apartments in both arsenals are adorned with countless numbers of trophies formed of different weapons, innumerable flags, and instruments of murder, elegantly arranged into garlands, tapestries, and chamber arabesques, as if they were flowers and fruit, children of Pomona and Flora, and not the work of the Cyclops, the implements of Mars and the Furies. Man loves to sport poetically with the serious. Among all nations the military dress is variegated, gay, glittering, and adorned. While our citizens go about their peaceful employments in sad-coloured garments, our warriors go to battle shining in all the colours of the rainbow. One would think black were a more fitting colour, the better to remind them of the melancholy nature of their trade; to diminish their thirst for slaughter, to which the outward pomp of their business seems almost to invite. Their weapons should not be displayed in elegant ornamental compositions in arsenals, but kept piled up in the vaults of their churches; perhaps wars would then be less frequent, and arms not be taken up lightly, but only in the name of God and our native land.

Among the trophies, there stands in one of the halls in the new arsenal a large Russian eagle, whose neck, body, and legs are composed of gun-flints; the pinions of swords; every feather on the breast and belly is a dagger; every tail feather a yataghan; the eyes, the muzzles of two black pistols; the gullet, the bore of a cannon; a terrible "*noli me tangere*," a proper symbol of the Russian state, which has soared to its present height on the pinions of swords and bayonets. Woe to those who meet the lightning of that eagle's eyes, or the thunder of that terrible throat! Woe to those who rumple his sharp pinions, and whom his sabre claws shall tear. In another hall is a statue of Catherine in white marble, throned in a royal chair, and surrounded by all the emblems of imperial power. The statue was erected by Orloff in her lifetime, and presented with the building. Her horse, a white one stuffed, stands near her; it should rather have been copied in marble; such a bridled and saddled ghost makes too unmajestic a figure here. The saddle is not a lady's side-saddle, but an ordinary man's saddle; Catherine must therefore have sat on horseback like one of her generals.

Some of the historical souvenirs and antiquities are highly interesting;

\* Such patriotic gifts are not rare among the wealthy subjects of the Russian emperors. We often hear, Count — has given a million to raise a corps of cadets; that Prince — has built a barrack at his own expense; or that the merchant — has given to some public library a hundred thousand rubles. In the year 1812, magnificent offerings of this kind were made; but even in times of peace, not only legacies are left to the state, but, what is more remarkable, donations *inter vivos*, are made.

for example, the standards of the Strelitz, huge things made of pieces of silk sewed together, and adorned with many highly original pictures characteristic of that fanatical Russian prætorian hand, who may be justly called the Janizaries of Christianity. They are greatly deserving of the attention of historians, although, as far as I know, they have not yet been noticed by any. In the middle of the flag sits God the Father, holding the last judgment; over his head is the azure sky of Paradise, beneath him blaze the flames of the infernal gulf; at his right hand stand the just, that is, a chorus of Russian priests, a division of Strelitzes, and a number of bearded Russians; to his left the unbelievers and the wicked, that is, a tribe of Jews, Turks, and Tartars, negroes, and another crowd in the dresses of Nyemtzi, or German West Europeans. Under each group the national name is inscribed; and so, also, by those tormented in the flames of hell. "A Turban, a German, a Miser, a Murderer," &c. Many angels, armed with iron rods, are busied in delivering the rest of the unbelievers, the shrieking Jews, Mahomedans, and other infidels, to the custody of the devils. Such unnoticed pictures as these often speak more plainly than any thing else what is passing in the secret soul. Near the flags lie a number of the accoutrements of the Strelitzes, and the images of their patron saints; each saint has its own little case, of which a whole row, fastened to straps, were worn on the breast, in a fashion similar to the Circassians. Some Russian cannon of the period are also placed here; they are very large, cast in iron, and ornamented with silver and gold.

To every emperor and empress since Peter the Great a separate apartment is devoted, containing the clothes, weapons, and utensils belonging to them, with the instruments of war in use at that time, uniforms, &c. &c. The uniforms of distinguished generals, with all their orders, crosses, and ribbons, are here deposited in glass cases; many thousand ells of historically interesting ribbons figure among them. With the help of this cabinet a very good history of the Russian army might be composed. We may here learn that the Semeonoff and Preobrashanski regiments of the guards, the most important and celebrated legions, the core of the Russian prætorian bands, during their century of existence have changed their uniform five-and-twenty times; and that it does not now in the least resemble what it was a hundred years ago. The changes of the Russian soldier from white to black, from red to green, from long to short, and from wide to narrow, are more manifold than those from caterpillar to chrysalis—from chrysalis to butterfly. In the chamber of Alexander there are not less than sixty orders that he wore: the broad ribbon of the order of St. George, however, is not among them; the emperor would not accept it, although it was decreed him several times by the chapter of the order and the senate. This order is only given for a great battle won, for the preservation of the empire, or the restoration of peace by a series of military exploits; and the emperor, who could not ascribe one of these deeds to himself personally, refused the honour, in order to maintain the credit of the order and its laws.

Ever since Peter the Great, the Russian emperors have voluntarily subjected themselves to their own laws and ordinances, and thereby given their subjects a great example. The pike which Peter carried as a volunteer in his own army, the uniforms he wore as sergeant, captain, and colonel, the leathern shirt he wore as a carpenter, all of which are preserved in the arsenal, constantly warn his successors to follow his example.



In Peter's apartment there is still kept the cabriolet he made use of to measure the roads; the number of revolutions made by the wheels are shown by the machinery contained in the box behind. On the lid of this box is a curious old picture representing Peter's method of travelling. It is a portrait of the cabriolet itself, drawn by one horse, and driven by Peter. Behind him are newly-built houses, and gardens laid out; before him a forest and a wilderness, to the annihilation of which he is boldly proceeding; behind him the heavens are serene, before him the clouds are heaped up like rocks. As this picture was probably designed by Peter himself, it shows what he thought of himself.

In remarkable contrast with the little modest cabriolet of the road-making and measuring emperor is the great triumphant car, with its flags and kettle-drums, which Peter the Second drove before the band of his guards, at the time when the ladies wore hoop-petticoats and the gentlemen long perriwigs. Paul's rocking-horse; Peter the Third's Holstein cuirassiers, who were so great a cause of vexation to the native Russians; Senka Rasin's state chair of ebony, garnished with rude pistol instead of lace; the uniform of General Miloradovitsh,\* in which the hole made by the bullet that pierced his heart in the revolt of the 14th of December, is yet to be seen—all furnish employment for the imagination of the historian.

In this collection, the accoutrements of neighbouring states have not been neglected; even the equipments of the Japanese and Chinese may here be studied. The cuirasses and coats of mail of the Japanese guards are made of tortoiseshell, which cover the whole body, and are put together in small scales: the face is concealed in a black mask representing an open-mouthed dragon. The Chinese soldier is clothed from head to foot in thickly-wadded cotton: if he cannot move about much in battle he must be, at all events, in some measure protected against arrows and cudgels. Grimacing masks are also in use among them. The timid have every where a great wish to infuse into others, by means of disguises, that terror which they cannot inspire by their own courage. The Chinese weapons appear to have the same aim: among them is a halberd, of which the edge of the axe is nearly six feet long, an instrument of murder which would require a free space of ten feet diameter for every soldier to wield properly; it seems destined for the destruction of giants, but a Roman soldier with his short sword would have been quite safe from them. Countless as are the uniforms, there is scarcely one to which the Russians have not once been opposed, the Japanese not excepted—and scarcely one from which they have not torn some trophy of victory.

Those in the arsenals of St. Petersburg are splendid silver shields of Turkish leaders; Polish, Prussian, French, and Persian flags; and at least a thousand ells of silk in Turkish standards, besides a whole heap of crescents taken from the mosques. In one room we have an opportunity of admiring the singular forms of keys among various nations belonging to Persian, Grusinian, and Turkish fortresses stormed by the Russians. By every bunch of keys is a view of the city that surrendered them.

A cannon-foundry is annexed to the new arsenal, where a powerful

\* The command of the emperor to deposit the uniform of a general or commander in a public place, the arsenals of St. Petersburg or Moscow, or in any church, is a peculiar distinction which has only fallen to the lot of a few patriots.



steam-engine is at work. The borers are held firm, and the heavy metal pieces of ordnance are made to turn on them by steam-engine; more force is thus given to the thrust by their own weight than the lighter borer could impart. I should like to see the man who has now and then cast a glance on the dial-plate of time, and could walk among these fire vomiters without emotion. Truly, in the schools, in the workshops, they are labouring also at the grandeur of the empire: the merchant in his speculations, and the mechanic improving in his manipulations, are toiling indirectly to increase its power and extent; but the cannon-founder stands in more immediate reference to future battle, and all his work betrays too evidently his hostile purpose. Every touchhole that he bores, every gun's mouth that he polishes, excites, in a warlike and growing state like Russia, hope fear, compassion, and the lust of battle.

From this foundry, the marine as well as the land artillery is supplied; we saw here guns to carry 120 pound balls. God give these monsters full draughts from Ocean's beakers and sink them to his lowest depths, where, oblivious of their fires, they may become the life-bowls of the shark, and a safe dwelling and deposit for the oyster and its brood! Such must, in fact, be the destiny of many. The workman knows not whether he toils at a fire-vomiter or a water-drinker—at a giver of death or a protector of life—at a hurler of thunder or a house for a mute fish.

When the cannon are cast, bored, and finished, amid the songs of the workmen—a Russian workman is always singing, whether in the service of Ceres or of Mars—they are brought to the place of trial, where they are thoroughly examined by the engineers and masters of the works, till at last the master sets his stamp upon them and baptizes them. The heavy birth is accomplished. "Go on thy bloody path, thou giant child, and let thy first stammering be in thunder! Scare the enemy from the paternal fields! Be thy country's truest friend and turn thy forehead to the foe, that her temples may stand, her gardens bloom, and her children flourish in peace!"

The finished cannon are piled up in the spacious inner courts of the arsenal. We saw as many here, ready to the last nail, with rammer, match, and sponge, as would have sufficed to give the spectacle of the battle of Leipsic over again. We counted 800 in one place, as yet all free from crime and blood; but they bear evil in their hearts, and but await the wave of one mighty hand to begin, with the aid of a thousand willing ones, their destructive flight.

The veil that hangs over Europe's future is impenetrable, and the West looks with terror for the moment when it shall be raised. Where will be the theatre—what the parts that will be played by those actors, now ready painted and dressed? Whose is the burning city—whose the host at which they are to aim? To whom will Victory give the palm? Will they enter Vienna, or Berlin, or Paris? Triumphant, to threaten yet further, or captive and fettered, as silent trophies to adorn their public buildings?

The courts of the arsenals are filled with balls, the doors and passages adorned with them in pyramids. They are black, and no prophetic or fate-proclaiming spirit hand has yet inscribed upon them "The — of November, 18—, to appear in the market-places of Olmütz;" or "in the spring of 18—, with the first swallows, in Constantinople;" or "to awaken up the English sailors at Whitsuntide;" or "to greet the Parisians on New Year's Eve;" or "in 19—, to bring the rebellious Swedes to sub-

mission;" or "in 1910, to make the Chinese pliant." In fact, so large a future lies before the Russian cannon-balls, their destiny is so adventurous, that fancy is tamed when she ponders on all the possible events in their existence, and on all the pens and printing-presses to which the description of their exploits may give employment.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE IMPERIAL PALACES.

WHEN the Emperor Paul began to be afraid of his subjects, he intrenched himself behind the strong walls of the Michailow Samok (fort). He pulled down the old summer palace\* on the Fontanka, and built in its stead one of granite, surrounded by walls and ditches, and bristling with cannon, and dedicated it to the archangel Michael according to Russian custom, which dedicates to protecting saints and angels not only churches, but fortresses, castles, and other buildings. The castle has a more gloomy exterior than the other palaces of St. Petersburg, and an extraordinary style of architecture. It is an immense, high, strong, massive square, whose four façades all differ the one from the other. The ditches are again partly filled up, and laid out in gardens, but the main entrance is still reached over several drawbridges, like a knightly castle in the middle ages. In the square before the chief gate stands a monument, insignificant enough as a work of art, which Paul erected to Peter the Great with the inscription, "Prodädu Pravnuk" (the grandson to the grandfather). Over the principal door, which is over-loaded with architectural ornaments, is inscribed in golden letters a passage from the Bible in the old Slavonian language. "On thy house, will the blessing of the Lord rest for evermore." This prophecy was badly fulfilled, for the emperor had only inhabited the house three months when he met his death from a hand that his cannon could not protect him against.

The palace was built with extraordinary rapidity, five thousand men were employed on it daily till its completion. To dry the walls more quickly, large iron plates were made red-hot, and fastened to the walls for a time. Nevertheless, the masses of stone and lime were not to be dried so rapidly, and very soon after the death of the emperor the palace was abandoned as quite uninhabitable. Although it has been completely repaired; it has never been dwelt in since, but applied to other purposes. The expense of the building was not less than 18,000,000 rubles. By taking sufficient time to it, it might easily have been done for six millions. The halls and spaces of the castle are large and labyrinth-like. A splendid marble stone staircase leads to the first story, and the vestibules and cor-

\* In opposition to this old summer palace, the usual residence of the Emperor is called the Winter Palace, which name, since the disappearance of the "Summer Palace," is meaningless.

ridors are paved with beautiful kinds of marble. The floorings of the saloons were taken from the Tauride palace, because the new ones could not be waited for. They have since been restored to their old places. The rooms where Paul was murdered are sealed and walled up. The Russians generally do this with the room in which their parents die. They have a certain dread of them and never enter them willingly. The Emperor Alexander never entered them. The present emperor, who dreaded neither the cholera in Moscow, nor revolt in St. Petersburg, nor the dagger in Warsaw, but shows a bold countenance every where, has viewed them several times. These rooms, easily recognizable from without by their darkened and dusty windows, are on the second story. The apartments of the beautiful Lapuchin are directly under, on the first floor. They are now inhabited by the keeper of the castle. The stairs which led down from them are broken away. During the reign of Alexander, the castle fell so much into decay, that when Nicholas caused it to be restored, it cost 62,000 rubles merely to remove the dirt and rubbish. The painted ceilings have considerable interest. In one is represented the revival of the order of Malta. Ruthenia, a beautiful virgin, with the features of Paul, is seated on a mountain. Near her, the mighty eagle. Fame flying from the south in terror announces the injustice done her in the Mediterranean, and entreats the mighty eagle to shelter her under his wing. In the distance is seen the island threatened by the waves and the hostile fleets. In another hall all the gods of Greece are assembled, whose various physiognomies are those of persons of the court at that time. The architect whose purse profited considerably by the building of the castle, appears among them as a flying Mercury. When Paul, who was a ready punster, and who knew very well that all the money he paid was not changed into stone and wood, caused the different faces to be pointed out to him, he recognised the face of the Mercury directly, and said laughing to his courtiers, "Ah! voilà l'architecte, qui vole."

The old Michaeloff palace is now the abode of the school of engineers. One hundred and fifty young persons here receive their mathematical and physical education. Its gardens are filled with blooming young cadets, who play and exercise there; and the former audience and banqueting-rooms are partly used as school, examination, sleeping, and eating-rooms, for the pupils, and partly to hold collections of various objects of a very attractive kind, of the highest interest for Russian engineering, and the science of fortification. It is wonderful what progress they have already made in this branch.

Russia, with reference to its military fortifications, is divided into ten circles. To the objects relating to the fortification of each circle, a separate hall is devoted. In large presses, in the halls, are kept all the plans, general and special, of already existing or projected fortresses. Each fortress has its own press for the *matériel*, in which are specimens of the bricks, kinds of earth, and the different rocks which lie in the neighbourhood, and of which the fortresses are, or are to be, constructed. Lastly, on large stands in the middle of the halls, are to be seen all the fortified places in Russia, modelled in clay and wood, and with such exactness, that not the slightest elevation, or sinking of the ground, not a tree, or a house is forgotten. In this manner are presented, among others, the most striking pictures of Kieff, Reval, and Riga. It is worthy of remark, that among them is a complete representation of all the castles of the Darda-



nelles, with their bastions and towers, and the most minute details of all the little creeks of the Hellespont, and the neighbouring heights and rocks. By means of these models, the whole plan of attack on the Dardanelles could be directed from St. Petersburg. It is a question whether the English have had a like foresight, and possess a similar picture in detail. The mingling of the castles of the Dardanelles with those already garrisoned by Russian troops, indicates that the Russians already look upon them as their own, and keeps warm the memory of Alexander's saying, "*Il faut avoir les clefs de notre maison dans la poche.*"

In one of the rooms is an extraordinary quantity of ukases and military ordinances, having reference to the erection of defences. They are signed, and many of them corrected, by the different emperors and empresses with their own hands. Catherine, in particular, has made many corrections with a red-lead pencil; and the present emperor always makes with his own hand, his amendments, alterations, annotations, and additions to his laws, decrees, and sentences. I saw here a hundred repetitions of those three important words, "*Buit po semu*" (Be it so), which are annexed to every ukase. Catherine's handwriting is bad; but the signature is never hurried; on the contrary, she seems to have taken trouble in painting every one of the Russian letters. All the long letters have a little flourish under them, which are made with a trembling hand: some are quite awry, nor are all the letters on a line. The letters are not joined, but nearly every one stands alone and tolerably perpendicular, without flow or rounding; it is like the handwriting of an old man. Even the individual letter will sometimes be formed of unconnected strokes. The whole is plain and without any ornamental additions. After her name "Ickathrina" stands always a large dot, as if she would say, "And therewith Punctum Basta." The Emperor Alexander wrote a fine hand; his name begins with a large elegant A.; the other letters, though narrow, are not very plain till the conclusion, the r is very plainly written and well-formed. Under the name is a very long complicated flourish, which looks confused at first, but the thread is easily found, as it is always very regularly formed, and in the same figure. Nicholas writes decidedly the best hand of all the Russian emperors; it is calligraphically irreproachable, regular, intelligible, and flowing. The emperor begins with an arching stroke of the pen, under which his name stands as under a roof. The last stroke of the i slopes under in a slender arch once or twice, is then carried upwards to join the first line, and ends over the name in a thick bold stroke made with a firm hand and the whole breadth of the pen. The name is thus prettily inclosed in a frame.

There can be no doubt that the new Michailoff palace, the residence of the Grand-Duke Michael, is the most elegant building in St. Petersburg. It was built in 1820, by an Italian of the name of Rossi. The interior is decidedly the handsomest and most tasteful in decoration and furniture in the whole city, and it is a real enjoyment to feast the eye on the noble architectural proportions of the exterior. It would not be easy to give to a royal edifice so advantageous a position as this palace possesses; even the Winter Palace has it not. Open from all sides, it expands with all its various wings and courtyards, in the most graceful manner, presenting a complete and perfect picture to the eye, not a tower, point or supernumerary building to disturb the beautiful proportion. Behind the palace lies the Little Summer Garden, as it is called, whose lofty trees and



groups of foliage form a pleasing contrast with the elegant architectural lines. Before the chief front is a spacious lawn scattered with graceful little buildings, the turf embroidered with tufts of flowers and shrubs. The inner court is divided from it by an iron-grating, the design of which, closely examined, must be admitted to be a model of good taste. All the out-buildings and numerous courts between them, are in such harmony with each other and the main building, that it is evident the whole was one design, and that nothing has been afterwards added or patched on. All the buildings around are occupied by the establishments of the Grand-Duke Michael, so much so, that this quarter of the city might almost be called his kingdom. Here are the dwellings of his officers, his stables, his riding-school, &c. The latter deserves particular mention, as the finest of the kind that exists any where. In the establishment fifty young people are instructed in riding and in all arts that have the remotest reference to horse or rider; for this object, and for the carousels in the fine riding-house, at which the court is often present, a number of the finest horses are kept, and both horses and riders are so well lodged and fed, that it is a pleasure to pass through the range of clean and elegant sleeping-rooms, sitting, and school rooms, saddle-rooms, stables, &c. All these apartments have double folding-doors in the centre, which stand open the whole day. A long carpet is laid along all the floors down to the stable, and the inspector at a glance can overlook every thing; can satisfy himself whether the beautiful white Arabian Asir, so celebrated for his silken hair and broad forehead, and the fiery Haimak of English blood, out of a mare from the Orloff stud, are in good condition; at the same time he can see what the young cadets, who value themselves so much on their rosy cheeks and sprouting beards, are doing in their chambers. It is wonderful how pure the air is kept in spite of this slight separation; it is as if the stud were perfumed with eau de Cologne, as well as the cadets.

The young men go through their course of study in six years. Ten are dismissed every year to the army as riding-masters. The art of riding was originally established by Germans in Russia; but it has undergone various modifications, and the riding-masters now coming from Germany must go through a school again to accomplish the requisite feats of art. In the Russian cavalry, the horses must constantly maintain such parade paces that the breaking-in they get from one rider is not enough. The poor animals feel too painfully the severity of Russian discipline; and there is no army, where notwithstanding the goodness of the horses, so many are destroyed in the breaking-in and the parade, as in the Russian. Nevertheless, a tournament or a quadrille executed by these beautiful steeds in the presence of the court, and by a brilliant illumination, is by no means an uninteresting spectacle; the spectators sometimes take a part in it. The riding-school is splendidly decorated on these occasions; among other things there are six looking-glasses, so large that the rider can see himself from head to foot. To keep these glasses in good condition, and repair what the horses hoofs have spoiled, must bring a good deal of money to the imperial manufactory.

Within the Michailoff quarter, if we may make use of the expression, is the colossal Exercising-house. This *manège* covers a space, unbroken by a single pillar, of 630 feet long, and 150 wide; a regiment can go through its evolutions there with perfect convenience; a battalion may

manœuvre there, and two squadrons might fight a battle there. This establishment originated, as did nearly all such places in St. Petersburg, in the time of Paul. Sixteen giant stoves warm the building, and the walls are lined with thick woollen-cloth. The roof with its appendages presses on the thick walls with a weight of 300,000 hundred weight; the iron rods alone weigh 12,840,000 pounds, and to this must be added 3000 great trunks of trees made use of in the woodwork, and 2000 square fathoms of iron plates with which the whole is covered without. The Circassians may be generally seen here busied in their feats of horsemanship, or shooting at a mark, at which times a student in acoustics may make many interesting observations. A pistol-shot awakens so prodigious an echo, that heard from the street one might fancy the whole building falling in one crash.

When Potemkin, the conqueror of the Khan of the Crimea, resided in the Tauride palace, presented to him, and afterwards purchased from him by Catherine, and with his inordinate love of show, animated and adorned those desolate apartments, the palace may have answered the expectations raised by its name. It should have been seen in the days when the insolent and profuse favourite gave his empress a triumphal fête. It looks now like a ball-room on the morning after a festival. The exterior can never have laid claim to any particular beauty, and the best of its contents it has been robbed of to adorn other palaces. Although it is now and then inhabited by the imperial family in the spring, the furniture is of a very ordinary description, the large looking-glasses are dimmed, the tables and chairs oldfashioned: the collection of antiquities, displayed in the first saloon, contains little that is valuable or original; and the pictures are for the most part bad copies of good originals. The enormous ball-room, the largest in St. Petersburg, is the only part on which the palace can pride itself. An idea may be formed of its size, from the fact that 20,000 wax-lights are necessary to light it up completely, and that the colossal group of the Laocoon, at the one end, can be plainly seen from the other only by means of a telescope. The last grand festival given here, was on the marriage of the Grand-Duke Michael, to which occasion the present decorations were owing. The marble is all false, the silver is plated copper, the pillars and statues are of brick, and the pictures copies. The looking-glasses although ten feet wide, and lofty in proportion, are so badly made, that the surface on examination is found to be all in waves and full of bubbles; they belong to an early period of the St. Petersburg manufactory, and a comparison with the modern productions will show the progress made in this branch of industry.

In one of the numerous chambers inhabited by the Emperor Alexander, we had an opportunity of studying the titles of the Russian great officers of state, for in the bureaux and drawers we found a number of envelopes with the addresses printed on them. "*Natschalniku Morskago Shtaba Moyego*" (To the chief of my marine staff). "*Glavnonatshalstvuyashtshemu nad potstovium Department*" (To the principal of the post department). A table-cover with some drops of wax from the candles used by Alexander, and some crayon-drawings by his admirable consort Elizabeth, and other objects of the same kind, will not be seen without interest.

The Annitschkoff palace, is much more frequently inhabited by the present imperial family than the Tauride palace. The former stands on

the great Prospekt in the neighbourhood of the Fontanka, and closes the brilliant range of palaces in that street. It was originally built by Elizabeth, and bestowed on Count Rasumofsky, then twice bought by Catherine, and twice given to Prince Potemkin; it is now the favourite abode of the emperor, and handsomely built, but has no particular historical interest. A part of the court constantly resides here; here also the emperor holds the greater number of his councils, receives ambassadors, &c.; hence the cabinet of St. Petersburg may be called the cabinet of Annitshkoff, as that of London is called the cabinet of St. James's, and that of Paris the cabinet of the Tuileries.

The pitiless flames of 1837, having consumed the whole of the splendid interior of the Winter Palace; the White Hall, and the Hall of St George, the Hall of the Generals, with its 400 portraits of marshals, admirals, and generals; the apartments of the empress with all their costly contents, the labour of thousands of hands; the splendid Malachite vases, and beautiful chimney-pieces, and pillars of jasper; a detailed account of the palace as it formerly was, would possess little interest.

Those who have seen the Winter Palace before the conflagration, will hardly reflect without sorrow on the enormous mass of wealth and industry devoured by the greedy flames. It is a question whether since the burning of Persepolis, so much and such precious fruits of human art and labour have within six hours vanished into smoke. The glorious and prosperous reigns, and the magnificent courts, of Elizabeth and Catherine, and the tasteful courts of Alexander and Nicholas, had for nearly a century been amassing these treasures. The effect of this one conflagration on the industry of St. Petersburg has been and still must be great. It will demand millions to restore what has been lost. The fortunes of many families, nay many new branches of industry, may be said to have arisen from the ashes of the Winter Palace. The fire makes an epoch in the history of the city. From it many families date their titles and diplomas, their rise and prosperity; many also their disgrace and fall.

The suites of apartments were perfect labyrinths; it is said that not less than six thousand persons had their abode there. Even the chief of the imperial household, who had filled that post twelve years, was not, it is said, perfectly acquainted with all parts of the building. As in the forests of the great landholders, many colonies are formed for years together, of which the owner takes no notice, so there nestled many a one in this palace not included amongst the regular inhabitants. The watchers on the roof placed there for different purposes, among others to keep the water in the tanks from freezing during the winter by casting in red-hot balls, built themselves huts between the chimneys, took their wives and children there, and even kept poultry and goats who fed on the grass of the roof; it is said that at last some cows were introduced, but this abuse had been corrected before the occurrence of the fire.

The Hermitage joins the Winter Palace to the east; then follows the imperial theatre, some other palaces belonging to private persons, and last of all the Marble Palace. Without doubt every one on hearing this name, will picture to himself an elegant white, gay-looking palace, shining from afar like a temple of Solomon on the banks of the Neva, and will not be a little astonished to find it a dark fortress-looking building. Such at least is its appearance among the cheerful smiling palaces of St. Petersburg, though it might not be so striking in gloomier cities. It



ought more properly to have been called the Granite Palace, for much more granite and iron have been employed on it than marble. The extraordinary massive walls are built of blocks of granite, the supports of the roof are iron beams, the roof itself sheet-copper, the window-frames gilded copper. The palace was last inhabited by the Grand-Duke Constantine, and is now evidently much neglected. The above named are the only imperial residences in St. Petersburg itself. The number of the present imperial family (the Russian throne was never surrounded by so many princes and princesses as at present) affords room for conjecture that later travellers will find more palaces to describe.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE HERMITAGE.

It is a well-known fact, that Catherine built her Hermitage, as Frederick built his Sans Souci, and Numa Pompilius his grove of Egina. So many have made a pilgrimage to the Hermitage and told of its splendours, that it seems a twice-told tale to speak of it again. As it is said, however, that the building, or at least the greater part of it, is to be pulled down, and reconstructed on a new plan, and as we may be the last to speak of it as Catherine arranged it, those who are not prepared to pack their travelling-trunks and set off for the north this winter, will not perhaps object to another description of the doomed edifice. The treasures contained in the place are, moreover, so abundant, that thousands might wander through it, and every one find something new, that had escaped the attention of his predecessors.

The Hermitage, therefore, be it said for the hundredth and the last time (?), is no cloistered solitude, no rocky grotto, hidden amid the waters of the Neva's murmuring sources, but a magnificent palace, a great temple of the Muses loftily and proudly throned, at the mouth of the broad river; a temple in which every mental enjoyment has an altar reared in its honour. The forests of masts excepted, no forests are here to be seen: not except the bears and foxes worn by the St. Petersburg elegants on the court quay, are there any wild animals in this wilderness: the rocks of this solitude are chiselled, polished, and perforated by well frequented saloons, the hermit is an empress; the muses, nymphs, and other divinities of the woods, are visible and warm-blooded princesses and countesses fed with the nectar and ambrosia of the imperial table.

The empress built this magic temple for the recreation of her leisure in the conversation of men of learning, and for the preservation of the productions of art, and it is well known how attractive, how splendid and luxurious were the evenings passed here, when the business transacted in the Winter Palace was ended, and when, traversing the covered passages and bridges that connected the buildings, she entered her own magic cremona, where she had formed a little republic of arts and letters.



We possess many an alluring picture by Storch, by Dupré de St. Maure and by others who took a part in those evenings, of the perfect freedom and equality that reigned here, in accordance with the ukases suspended in all the apartments of the palace. Musicians displayed their talents, artists their works, and men of wit their opinions, and the pictures which we see elsewhere only as allegorical representations of art and science-loving princes were here every day realized. On the roof of the buildings the mighty Semiramis of the north had created a garden with flowers, shrubs, and lofty trees heated in winter by subterraneous vaults, and illuminated in summer, and many might here really esteem their abode more splendid than the Grecian Olympus.

It is true the soul is now wanting to the whole, yet enough remains to quicken the spirit and warm the heart. Catherine's garden yet blooms, though the birds she fed have long since moulted their feathers for the last time. Her theatre is so unchanged that a representation might be given in it to-morrow, if the actors could be reanimated; the laws she made for the etiquette of her literary evenings are still suspended in the apartments—they want only a second Catherine to put them again in force; the library, the collection of pictures, the museum, are still there as she left them; nothing is yet injured, only here and there something added. In another year all will be changed, and Catherine's court of love and the muses transformed into—what?

The great picture collection contains many that are renowned all over the world, and may well enchant the eyes of connoisseurs, particularly those who admire the Netherlands school of painting. On the whole, there are more Dutch cottages such as Ostade painted (offering the strangest contrast to the palace, to which they belong), than there are Venetian palaces or Roman churches; more North German cattle-pastures than southern Alps; more unroasted and roasted game, than roasted martyrs; more hares transfixed by the spit of the cook, than St. Sebastians by the arrows of the heathen; more dogs, horses, and cows, than priests, prophets, and saintly visions. So numerous are the productions of some of these masters here, that separate halls are devoted to them, and it is scarcely conceivable how enough of their pictures were found for other collections.

Going through the collection in the usual manner, the apartment first entered is that containing the pictures of Van der Neer. This artist has painted the moon as often as if he had been one of Diana's priests; every where it is the moon, and again the moon. In general there is the sea, or a lake, or some other piece of water in the neighbourhood, on which the long reflected rays stream far into the dark distance; fishers are in the foreground, and boats dancing on the silver wave.

In fact, of all the heavenly bodies the moon is the only one that belongs to painters. The stars are too distant and too small to produce greater effect in a picture than those on a royal mantle; they belong to astronomers, philosophers, and thinkers, and I believe no reasonable artist ever yet attempted to animate his picture with them. The sun is too magnificent, too bright and fiery, to be painted otherwise than in reflection; and the painter who endeavours to represent him seems to me to commit as great a fault as *he* does who attempts to represent the face of God. God and the sun can be seen only as they are reflected in their works. None can look on the face of the sun but when he is veiled in clouds. It is

otherwise with the moon, whose fair form shines so softly and tenderly in the vaults of heaven, and in whom all eyes may rejoice.

As if directly to contradict our remark on Van der Neer's moon-light pictures, in the very next room hang Claude Lorraine's four celebrated pictures of the four times of the day, where not only the morning and evening sun are depicted, but also the powerful orb in his midday splendour, indicated by a dwarfish blot of red colour. Beautiful as the landscapes of the renowned Lorraine otherwise were, we could not reconcile ourselves to his pitiful Apollo, and were sorry that Claude had not avoided this mistake. These much-esteemed pictures were painted in Italy, and passed through various hands in Italy and France, till they reached the Hungarian forest, and remained a while at Cassel, whence they were stolen by the Corsican Cæsar and laid at the feet of his consort in Paris. From Paris they were brought by Alexander and suspended in his northern Palmyra, where, amid snow and ice, they speak to the Hyperboreans of the glories of the south. They seem to be quite in their place here, and are better understood and more enjoyed than elsewhere; because here more than elsewhere is felt the want of what they display so gloriously. It will be long, probably, before a hand is found strong enough to remove them from their present places.

After Claude's landscapes, the next picture that greets us is a lovely maiden, by Pordenon, before the suffering Christ. Is it Anna, or is it Mary? — the oil-lavisher or the adulteress? She is beautiful, and to no manly and feeling heart can she plead in vain for sympathy. It is one of the loveliest female faces that lives on canvass, and well deserves to be sought out among thousands. We promise never to forget her, and wander further to where the old woman of Denner offers a pinch of snuff either to us or to her husband, who hangs near her. In these two pictures the very hairs on the head are counted, and even the hairs on the moles of the face. It is incomprehensible that Denner, who was undoubtedly a good painter, should have given himself so much trouble about every wrinkle and mole. It makes one melancholy to look at them; it is as if we saw how grief and vexation had laboured for years to furrow the skin. Yet has not Claude Lorraine painted every stubble in his corn-fields? Caracci's "Christ Bearing the Cross," and Dominichino's "Arrow Poisoner," are excellent pictures, and would be enjoyed if there were not too loud a screaming and cackling from Wynant's and Hondeköter's poultry. Here is a whole hall-full of fowls, chickens, ducks, peacocks, pheasants, and turkeys; as many of every race as in the St. Petersburg market. Willingly would we rest ourselves on the wooden bench beneath the protecting thatch that Wynant's pencil has created. Thick-foliaged oak-trees and fresh elder-bushes shade the wanderer; the pretty feathered tribe plume themselves and quarrel, and peck at the corn and the gnats in the grass. In the souls of these two painters most priceless peace must have borne sway. They seem to have dreamed of nothing but of the innocent dumb souls so wonderfully lodged in the bodies of domestic fowls, and to have been exclusively occupied with doves, capons, oxen, and calves. Even the disputes and wars of these birds cannot have disturbed their equanimity, for it is only the passions and wars of men which go to our hearts.

To the same class as Wynant belong Cuyp and Rosa di Tivoli. The pictures of the latter are a little over-laden, and his sheep look somewhat too knowingly at the spectator. But Cuyp makes one really long to

taste the cool grass he gives his sheep, and truly, it is a piece of good fortune for the St. Petersburg cows that they do not understand painted grass; they would no longer be able to chew their Ingrian moss, for mere vexation and envy. The celebrated cow of Potter, which ought at most to be called *notorious*, might be a little more decorous, and would certainly gain by it in our eyes. She is as unaesthetic as the Ganymede carried off by Jupiter's eagle, and the little drinking Bacchus at Dresden. It is inconceivable how she should owe her place in the Hermitage to a lady.

There are here so many battle-pieces by Wouvermann, that one cannot but be astonished at the fertility of this warlike genius: every where the victorious white horse—every where the wild bandit physiognomy of the soldiers of the thirty years' war; the poor tormented peasants, the scattered poultry, the burning cottages, the plundered herds, the ruined works of peace. The pictures of Wouvermann are all so alike, that if he had not painted so well, he would have said all he had to say in one picture. Moreover, it remains uncertain whether by his plundering soldiers, who all sit so easily and gracefully on horseback that they make one long to enlist under them, and whether, by the poor ragged peasants, who with their dishevelled hair and tattered garments rather excite our laughter than our pity, Wouvermann meant to render a service to Mars or to Ceres; or whether he only meant to facilitate the studies of the historian by so faithfully depicting the horrors of war.

From Wouvermann's wild soldiers let us take shelter in Rembrandt's reverend heads of old men, sages, and scribes, of which there is here the greatest collection that is perhaps to be found any where. A very instructive parallel may be drawn between Rembrandt's old men and Denner's. What grandeur, what pithiness, what clearness of spirit in one! What softness and feebleness in the other! Denner's old men are worthy old people, but they have lost their memory, mumble unintelligible words in a feeble voice, and sit in furs and dressing-gowns behind the stove over their coffee. Those of Rembrandt have led an active life—have retained, even in their eightieth year, reason, power, and clearness of comprehension; they are *men, viri consulares*, gray-headed chiefs, prophetic seers, experienced lawgivers, hoary emperors. The most celebrated picture of Rembrandt here, is the "Taking down from the Cross," a powerful, striking picture, which fills every spectator with pain and sadness.

At the further end of Rembrandt's hall we embark on the waves of Vernet's pencil. There are also many pictures here of *Horse Vernet's*. He visited Russia, and will scarcely have found a country in Europe where he could better study the nature of that noble animal. Russia possesses all possible varieties, from the wild rough-coated steeds of Siberia to the tamest and most thoroughly-broken parade and coach-horses; the half-wild horses of the steppe, the slender fiery Cossack horses, the small poor-looking but spirited horses of Poland and Lithuania, and the agile and unwearyed natives of the Crimea and the Caucasus.

In the apartment where Vernet's billows were heaving, several parrots were chattering and screaming. We fancied they must have been relics of Catherine's aviaries, and hoped to catch some echo from that vanished time; but we learnt to our sorrow, that the last of Catherine's parrots had died the year before last. Pity that there was none to repeat the last words of the imperial pupil. All is green in this apartment; green waves, green parrots, green malachite vases.



Nowhere are more splendid specimens of these vases to be seen than here: indeed, the whole imperial dwelling is sparkling with precious stones, pillars of jasper, cornices of porphyry, figures of lapis lazuli, and other wonders of the mine.

Near these ostentatious productions of modern art, are some neighbouring cabinets filled with trophies brought by Russian antiquaries from the graves of the Crimea. This is one of the most interesting collections to be seen any where; and we must admire the providence of the Russian government, and wonder at the good fortune that has preserved so many costly relics from so distant a period. From ancient times, the countless graves of the Greeks of Taurus, and of the original inhabitants of the Caucasus and Siberia, have been objects of zealous research. The Alarics, the Huns, the Tartars and the Cossacks of the present day, have plundered them, and melted down the treasures found therein. The greater part of the kurgans and mohilos of South Russia, have been long since burrowed like rabbit-warrens, and explored like mines; a considerable trade was and is yet carried on with the treasure found there. Whatever the watchfulness of the government could rescue from the un-historical merchants and robbers, has been deposited in the Hermitage. The graves of Kertsh, at the mouth of the Taurian Bosphorus, have yielded largely, and also the burial-places of Mithridates and his successors, the kings of the Bosphorus. The choicest objects are the laurel-wreaths of pure ducat gold. Many of them are quite perfect, not a twig or leaf being deficient. These wreaths adorned the victors' brows more gracefully than our orders and stars. The head which was adorned by the ancients, was far more the original seat of great deeds, than the breast adorned by us. The crowned head was a far more picturesque object than the star-covered coat. It never occurred to any painter to place the gloria of a saint or martyr on his bosom; no, the rays must grace and radiate from the throne of the spirit. Our cold climate, and our closely-fitting garments may have assisted this change, for it was not possible in the folds of a Greek or Roman drapery to place a decoration on the breast.

After the halls of the golden laurel-wreaths, and the Italian cameos, we come again to other magic productions of colour; the greater part of which formerly belonged to Malmaison. When the Emperor Alexander was in Paris, in 1814, he visited the divorced consort of Napoleon, who spoke to him of the smallness of the property that remained to her, and of the insecurity of its possession. Her imperial husband had laid at her feet so many spoils of the German and Italian galleries, that she was afraid, when all were claimed by their rightful owners, little would remain to her. Alexander bought the whole treasures of Malmaison, and enriched the Hermitage with them, whence they will not be so easily reclaimed. A part of the purchase-money has found its way back to Russia, with the young grandson of Josephine.

There are among them many Claude's, some powerful Domenichino's, and Tintoretto's, honey-sweet Carlo Dolces, the beautiful marble flesh of Van der Werft, the eggs, fish, and fish-women of Dow, the satin robes, embroidered coverings, and lovely faces of Mieris, and cut-onions, turnips, and vegetable-parings in abundance. Also a barber, and his well-soaped rogues of customers, who seem to have been taken by a Daguerrotype, for every little bubble in the soapy froth may be distinguished, and yet



the spirit of the whole has not suffered by the minute execution of the parts. A calculator, by Quintin Matsys, wise as he appears, has not yet solved his problem. Perhaps Matsys meant to indicate thereby the human mind, which has been thinking and calculating for thousands of years without being able to balance the account. The Vandyck's and Rubens's are so numerous that one can scarcely make way through them, the Rubens's particularly; whose persons are so enviably well fed, that they require no small space. There are also many mythological pieces of Rubens, subjects with which he should not have concerned himself. Some of them seem to be satires on the Grecian mythology. The Venuses of Rubens have swallowed too much Brabant beef and beer; there is in them as little that is plastic, antique, and divine, as in Sakspeare's Troilus and Cressida.

The Hermitage is not greatly frequented, as foreigners as well as natives must procure tickets. These are given indeed without difficulty, yet even this little obstacle is sufficient to keep numbers away. Love of ease, is, after vanity, the great impulse to all our actions, or at least to all our omissions. There are in St. Petersburg a number of families of the educated classes who have never visited the Hermitage; and how little is gained compared with what might be, even by those who do? When we look at the listless faces of the sight-satiated public, lounging past the pictures, we cannot help asking ourselves how so many painters could ever obtain such extraordinary renown. Where is the enthusiasm for their works, the rapture they inspire? For four thousand paintings reflecting half the natural world and half mankind, a two hours' saunter; for thirty thousand engravings, a few minutes; for three rooms full of statues, as many passing looks; for the antiquities of Greece, a couple of "Ah's" and "Oh's;" and for twelve thousand cameos and gems, scarcely a half-opened eye!

The most admired objects here are beyond all doubt the crown, jewels, and other valuables arranged in a separate cabinet with them. For boast as we may of our higher cultivation, the old Adam is so little driven from his kingdom, that we all grasp, like children and savages, more eagerly after what is bright and glittering, than after that which breathes life and grace? What is the water of Ruysdael's forest-brooks, to the water of the imperial diamonds? all the melting lustre of Carlo Dolce, to the lustre of those pearls? What are all the roses, apricots, and juicy pomegranates of Heemskerk, to the oriental splendours of the diadem? Cuypp's green meadows, seldom touch the heart, but the green of the emerald in yon sceptre, fills all hearts with hope and longing.

We human creatures, taken on the whole, are very sensual, rapacious, unrefined beings, and where we see hundreds yawning in the face of Rembrandt's "reverend old man," we scarcely see one so much a philosopher as not to grow more animated when the jewel-keeper grasps his keys, and opens that magic cabinet. In fact, it would be hard to find elsewhere so many jewels together. The old connexion of Russia with India and Persia has brought a quantity of precious stones into the treasury, and lately her own subject mountains have opened their bosoms, and yielded such treasures, that many a private person might be well contented with what was meant for the imperial little finger alone. Diadems, sceptres, armlets, bracelets, girdles, rings, bouquets of jewels, are displayed here in astonishing profusion, and if one dared to pluck a nosegay in this

sparkling garden, many would find a few sprigs sufficient to place them above the cares of life.

St. Petersburg has, in the Casan church, a copy of St. Peter's, and the Hermitage has a copy of Rafaele's Loggi. They are executed by the best Italian masters in one of the wings built for the purpose by the celebrated architect Guarenghi. These magnificent pictures they place in a more advantageous light than in Rome itself, and they can be better enjoyed here than there. In the passages of the Loggi are displayed some beautiful models in wax and ivory, partly representations of Russian popular life, which every one interested in the study of Russia will contemplate with delight. Among other things there is an exquisitely wrought settlement of Russian peasants in wax. A wooden dwelling-house shaded by birch-trees is seen on the borders of a brook. A fisherman is sitting by the brook, an old bearded peasant is at work in the yard, his daughter is going to the spring, the old mother is before the door feeding poultry. It is a pity this pretty rustic picture is composed of such perishable materials. The treasures contained in the library of the Hermitage, although they appear in the light of day, are yet more buried and concealed than those of the saloons of art. Among other interesting matters may be seen there the whole legacy of Diderot and Voltaire's library; the books as he used and abused them with his marginal notes in pencil, and the thumb-stains and dogs-ears left by his fingers on the covers.

We have but touched on some of the treasures of this palace, but enough has been said to show that a hermit might boldly renounce the rest of the world if allowed to make his cell here, where half nature and half mankind are offered to his contemplation on canvass, in colour, in marble, glass, and ivory; painted, chiselled, stamped, woven, and printed.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE FOUNDLING HOSPITAL.

THE director of the Foundling Hospital of St. Petersburg is a German, from one of the Baltic provinces. Indeed, nearly all the charitable institutions in Russia are presided over by Germans. When I went to pay my respects to him, I found him busily writing in an elegant study; and as his work did not admit of delay, he invited me to sit down till he had finished. There is some interest in examining the study of a man through whose hands there pass annually from 600 to 700 millions of rubles (for that is supposed to be the amount of revenue belonging to the hospital), and on whose judgment depends, in a great measure, the welfare of nearly 30,000 human beings; and I was therefore not sorry of the leisure thus afforded me for contemplating the director's birds and flowers, for some notion may be formed of a man's character from an examination of the objects by which he chooses to be habitually surrounded.

At length the director laid his pen aside, and said to me in a friendly

tone, "Now, sir, I am at your service. Put what questions you please to me, and then we will go and see whatever you wish to see." And thereupon he proceeded, while walking up and down the room, to inform me of the history, condition, and statistics of the vast institution.

The Vospitatelni Dom, or House of Education, of St. Petersburg, is of more recent origin than that of Moscow, of which it was only a dependent branch, when instituted by Catherine in 1770. The new establishment was at first one of very limited extent, containing, in 1790, not more than 300 children. Since the commencement of the present century, the number has increased with astonishing rapidity, for in 1837 no less than 25,600 of the rising generation were under the direction of this colossal institution. The number of children annually brought in has been continually on the increase. In 1829 the number amounted to upwards of 3000, from 1830 to 1833 it was between 4000 and 5000, and from 1834 to 1837 between 5000 and 7000.

No condition is annexed to the reception of the children; all are received, and the government has hitherto provided with the utmost liberality for the increasing wants of the hospital. The original endowment of Catherine was insignificant compared to the present wealth of the establishment, which has been enriched by presents from private individuals, and by large gifts from Alexander, Paul, and Nicholas, till it has become one of the wealthiest landed proprietors in Russia, not to speak of some dozens of millions lent out on mortgage. Alexander, moreover, made a gift to the hospital of the monopoly of cards, and of the revenue of the Lombard;\* and the constant ebbing and flowing that goes on in the St. Petersburg purses, makes the Lombard a place of very great importance. Thus it is that, in one way or another, the annual revenues of the Foundling Hospital do not fall short of from 600 to 700 millions of rubles, or about twice the amount of the national revenue of Prussia. The annual expenses of the institution are estimated at 5,200,000 rubles, and in 1837 the buildings then in progress for its accommodation were expected to cost two millions. Among others, a neat church was in the course of erection, on which it was intended to expend 600,000 rubles.

Within St. Petersburg itself are the principal buildings, where the children are usually kept during the first six weeks, after which they are sent out to nurse among the peasantry, within a circuit of about 130 versts. When about six years old, they are taken from their foster-parents, and the girls return to St. Petersburg for their education, while the boys are sent to a branch establishment at Gatshina.

It must not be supposed that the buildings at St. Petersburg have at all the air of a school or hospital; on the contrary, their spaciousness and magnificence give them rather the appearance of palaces. The Vospitatelni Dom, with its courts and gardens and its dependent buildings, occupies a space of 30,000 square toises,† close to the Fontanka, and therefore in the best part of the town. The main building is composed of what was formerly the palaces of Prince Bobrinski and Count Rasumoffski. These were purchased for the institution, but a number of additional buildings were erected, and the whole may now be said to form a little district of its own.

\* The establishment where money is lent on pledges, an institution which in almost every continental state is in the hands of the government.

† More than 28 English acres.



The Vospitatelnoi Dom of St. Petersburg is much more splendid than that of Moscow. The children are better educated, and for that very reason more easily provided for. Nevertheless, the mortality is much greater than at Moscow, owing partly to the greater poverty of the peasantry around St. Petersburg. Moscow lies in the centre of the most vigorous portion of the Russian population, among whom it is more easy to find good healthy nurses, and people disposed to treat the children well that are confided to them. Around St. Petersburg the bulk of the peasantry are of an Ingrian race; they and their houses are wretched in the extreme, and the population so small as not to average more than 70 to the square mile\* for the whole government of St. Petersburg. Of the children brought into the house, one-fourth die during the first six weeks at the breasts of the nurses; and of those sent out among the peasants, more than one-half die during the six years, so that at the end of that time, scarcely a third of the children brought into the institution remain alive. In the common course of nature, had they remained at the breasts of their mothers, more than half those children would have been alive at the end of the sixth year. It is partly to the enormous distances which the children have to be carried that this mortality must be attributed. Indeed many of them are all but dead when they arrive. Not merely St. Petersburg and its immediate environs, but one-half of Russia sends its surplus infantine population to this institution, and the other half deals in the same way towards Moscow. In 1836, on one and the same day, there arrived a child from Kisheneff in Bessarabia, and another from Tobolsk in Siberia, places considerably more than a thousand miles off. How many poor infants may not perish on such journeys before they even reach the Vospitatelnoi Dom at all.

When their education is complete, the children are relieved from all obligation towards the institution, and are left to devote themselves to such pursuit as they may themselves have selected, or have been prepared for. A large number of the boys are placed in the imperial manufactories of paper, carpets, looking-glasses, &c.; others are put out to merchants, &c. and those that have shown most talent become artists, priests, and students. The girls, in the same way, according to the abilities they have displayed, are put out as servants, *bonnes*, or governesses; and, as the girls have generally received instruction in French, German, drawing, music, &c., there is always a very great demand for governesses from the Vospitatelnoi Dom, the more so as the Russians know so little of those prejudices against illegitimate birth, which have descended to us from the middle ages, that there is scarcely a word in their language to express the idea. In 1836, thirty-two governesses had been placed in respectable families, and in 1837 the applications were so numerous, that it was apprehended not more than half the number required would be forthcoming.

In the institution there are always from 600 to 700 wet-nurses who are paid at the rate of 250 rubles a-year, and have their board, lodging, &c., free. On such terms, there is no doubt, an abundant supply of competent individuals may always be had. Of teachers and inspectors, or class ladies, as they are called in Russia, there are from 400 to 500 in the house,

\* As the German square mile is equal to 20 English square miles, it follows that the population does not exceed  $3\frac{1}{2}$  souls to the English square mile.

—French, German, and Russians,—and their salaries often amount to several thousands. The educational expenses of the institution are alone estimated at more than half a million, that is, including the establishment for boys at Gotshina. Twelve medical men, mostly Germans, are attached to the establishment, and are bound to pay frequent visits to the infants out at nurse in the country. Then there are cooks, housekeepers, and other servants, some of them pupils of the establishment, though, for many reasons, strangers are always preferred. In the building at St. Petersburg, the number of inmates rarely falls short of 6000.

In immediate connexion with this establishment is a lying-in hospital, conducted with the same degree of liberality, all that apply being received gratuitously, while the arrangements are so excellent that women far above the lowest classes frequently avail themselves of it. Women may enter the hospital, if they wish it, a full month before the period at which they expect their confinement, and the utmost secrecy is observed, none but those connected with the house being permitted to enter it. Even the emperor, when, on one occasion, he wished to intrude into the place, was stopped, and was prevailed on to respect the asylum. Every other part of the establishment, however, is freely shown, except on Sundays, on which day no strangers are admitted, but the friends and relatives of the foundlings, for many parents continue to watch the progress of their infants, even after having committed them to the care of the great house. Not only poor pedestrians and private soldiers may be seen wending their way to the Vospitatelni Dom on a Sunday, but ladies richly clad, and gentlemen bedizened with orders, may be seen stepping from their coaches-and-four.

The first place we visited was the lodge where the children are received on their arrival. It is a small warm room, and the entrance leading to it stands open night and day, all the year round. An inspectress and several servants are at all times in attendance, and a large book lies open in which the young stranger is forthwith registered. From fifteen to twenty usually arrive in the course of the day, and the only question ever asked is whether the child has been baptized and named. If the answer is in the affirmative, the name is entered in the book; if not, the child is merely numbered and registered accordingly, like a bale of goods. In the dusk of evening it is that the greatest number are usually brought in. In fine weather there are more arrivals than in bad, and in summer more than in winter. When we entered the room, it was about one o'clock; and down to that hour, the day had already increased the great family by seven, whom we found entered in the book under the numbers of 2310—2317. Sometimes when the mother unwinds the cloth she will find her infant already dead, in which case it is not received, but the fact is notified to the police.

When the poor mother, oft amid sobs and tears, has imprinted her last kiss upon her infant, the latter is conveyed to the chapel, to be immediately received into the bosom of the orthodox Greek church, and hymns and pious ceremonies of interminable length salute the newly arrived. Many die in the hands of the priests, and some on their way from the receiving lodge to the chapel, in which case there remain but two documents to tell the melancholy tale. In one book will be perhaps the following entry: "No 4512.—A child three weeks old. A girl. Received 6th April, 8 A. M." The corresponding entry then in another book will be: "No 4512. Died

6 April, 9 A. M. Handed to the gravedigger to be buried." Those that come alive out of the chapel, are examined by the medical attendant, and if found healthy, are delivered into the care of the inspectress of wet-nurses, who delivers for each a certificate something like the following: "No 4513. Boy. Baptized Ivan Petrovitsh. Received 10 May, 10 A. M. Healthy. Placed among the infants at the breast."

The wards for the sucklings are spacious, warm, well-lighted, and handsomely fitted up. In the anterooms are baths, constantly kept full of warm water, in which the children are frequently washed. The nurses are all neatly dressed in the Russian national costume. Sometimes the mothers will apply to be appointed nurses to their own children; a wish that is generally complied with, when no reason to the contrary presents itself. To prevent the nurses from changing the children confided to them, the cradles are placed alternately, first a boy and then a girl, and then the beds of the nurses two and two, in such a manner that between two infants of the same sex there must always intervene two nurses and another infant. In each ward there are from 40 to 50 beds, and on the occasion of my visit there were 650 sucklings, and an equal number of wet-nurses in the house.

Four or five deaths occur daily in the Vospitatelnoi Dom, or from 1500 to 1800 yearly.\* A section of the cemetery of Okhta is set apart for the foundlings. They are usually buried several at a time, those that have died during two or three successive days being committed to the earth at one and the same time. In that cemetery, it is supposed 30,000 of these children have already been deposited.

In the infirmary we found 150 patients. Three of the little sufferers had that morning closed their eyes for ever. Their bodies were laid out in a separate room, on small beds which had been neatly decorated according to the prescribed form, but no mother's eye was there to shed a tear upon the deceased. For my own part, however, the dead bodies laid out in that room, produced a less melancholy effect upon me, than the cradles intended for the living in the receiving lodge.

We next proceeded to that part of the building which was set apart for the girls who had returned from the country. I do not recollect how many hundred girls, from six years old to eighteen, were, at the period of my visit, in that part of the establishment, but I was astonished at the order and cleanliness of the rooms, the excellent arrangement of the schoolrooms and dormitories, and the neat appearance of the pupils themselves. Every thing about the place, compared with all similar establishments that I had seen in other countries, was really magnificent. The expression is not too strong.

It was just dinner time when we entered the dining-room. Long tables in three rows were neatly laid out, and long rows of the elder girls marched in from different sides, in double files, led by their governesses and inspectresses. Hundreds, however, came running in from the garden, or skipping down the stairs; they were differently clad, according to their several classes. Some were in red, others in blue; yellow, brown, &c., but all were clean, and their hair either laid smoothly over the forehead, or prettily braided. There was an air of health and cheerfulness about

\* This refers only to the house in St. Petersburg. Including the boys' house and the children out in the country, the annual deaths average from 2400 to 3000.



them all, and the sight of so many pretty girls all at once was quite bewitching. The director was standing by the side of me, and each of the children in passing saluted him in the most unconstrained manner with a "Good day, papa," in Russian, French, and German.

Gradually all had arranged themselves at their respective tables, and a moment of complete silence followed, after which there arose a hymn of praise to the Creator, who feeds the doves and the motherless. The singing in the Russian churches is at all times imposing; but to hear a hymn sung to a Russian sacred melody, by at least a thousand female voices, had in it something so irresistibly affecting, that nothing remained for the wayward heart but to yield to the general movement, to join in the act of praise, and leave a free course to tears.

After this pious exercise all sat down, and a lively buzz of conversation, accompanied by a brisk clattering of spoons, spread quickly through the hall. I was invited to taste the cheer. It happened to be a fast day, and the Russian viands on those occasions are little calculated to flatter a German palate; still I found all as good and savoury as fish, oil, turnips, and kapusta could well be made on such a day. Gigantic boilers and tureens rose by some invisible machinery from the kitchen below, and their contents were rapidly distributed among the plates, and found their way no less rapidly between the talkative lips for which they were intended.

After the spectacle of the wards for sucklings, the great dining-room was a relief and consolation. I felt thankful to God for those who were now old enough to help themselves to their food; but it was melancholy to think that for each little head in that room, three sisters reposed in the cold churchyard.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE EXCHANGE.

THE Germans have corrupted a word of Latin origin into *Börse*; the Russians have adopted it from the Germans, and *russianized* it into *Birsha*; but this name is bestowed upon every place where persons regularly meet for any object—among others, to the places where the *isvoshtshiks* stand while waiting for employment. In St Petersburg it is, therefore, not enough to direct your sledge-driver to the "*Birsha*" (Exchange); you must say the Dutch Exchange, for so the magnificent building on Vassili Ostroff, where the merchants assemble, is called by the lower class of Russians, probably from the circumstance of the Dutch merchants, who were invited to St. Petersburg by Peter the Great, having had the first settlement, where now the representatives of every maritime nation are to be found.

The Exchange of St. Petersburg is more favourably situated than many great public buildings. It stands on the extreme point of Vassili Ostroff, with a noble open space before it, and is reared on elevated foundations.

On either side the superb granite quays, that give solidity to the point of the island, divide the majestic river into two mighty arms, in which it flows in calm power to the right and left. Stately flights of granite steps lead down to the river. On the space before the building two massive "Columnæ rostratæ," above a hundred feet in height, and decorated with the prows of ships cast in metal, have been erected to the honour of Mercury. These columns are hollow; and on the summits, which are reached by a flight of iron steps, are gigantic vases that are filled with combustibles on all occasions of public illumination. The erection of the whole, including the quays, occupied nearly twelve years, from 1804 to 1816, a most unheard-of period in St. Petersburg, where a copy of St. Peter's at Rome was "got up in two years," and a new imperial palace rose from its ashes in eleven months. The great hall of colossal proportions is lighted from above. At either end and on both sides are spaces in the form of arcades: in one of the first stands an altar, with lamps constantly burning, for the benefit of the pious Russian merchants, who always bow to the altar, and sometimes even prostrate themselves, on their entrance, to implore the favour of all the saints to their undertakings. The blue or green modern frock-coats of the worshippers form as curious a contrast with their long patriarchal beards as the altar itself with its steps covered with an elegant Parisian carpet, and its hideous age-blackened image of a saint, which none would venture to modernize any more than they would attempt to put the razor to the Russian mercantile chin.

Among the foreigners forming part of the mercantile body the Germans are the most important, from their great numbers and the amount of business carried on by them. Vassili Ostroff, where they have whole lines of fine houses, and where almost every house of public entertainment and every shop has a German name over it, may be looked upon as a commercial colony of Germany. The first houses in St. Petersburg are English or German, the second rank is composed almost exclusively of the latter; some of them date their establishment from the infancy of the city. The tone of society in these houses is extremely agreeable. Without losing their nationality, the Germans have not disdained so much as the English to mingle with the Russians; and their solidity of character and mental cultivation show to great advantage, in a setting of Russian suppleness of demeanour and northern hospitality. The English form a colony apart yet more than the Germans, who have many Russian subjects among their body, while the former remain always the "foreign guests," who in time of peace share the privileges of the natives without partaking of their burdens. They call their body the St. Petersburg Factory. They have their own church, and live secluded among themselves, despising all other nations, and more particularly their hosts, the Russians; drive English equipages; hunt the bear on the shores of the Neva, as they do the tiger on those of the Ganges; decline taking their hats off to the emperor; and, looking down on all men, boast of their own indispensableness and their invincible fleets. They are, however, held in high consideration by the government and every one else—perhaps because they esteem themselves so highly. The English inhabit chiefly the magnificent quay that bears their name, where, however, many opulent Russians also possess handsome houses.

Besides the English and Germans, who are in possession of the maritime commerce of St. Petersburg, every nation in Europe has its consul and

representatives. London excepted, there is perhaps no other city in Europe in which all other nations have so great a commercial interest as in St. Petersburg. No Russian, either in St. Petersburg or any other part of the empire, engages in maritime trade; he has neither the knowledge nor the connections necessary thereto, still less the true commercial spirit of enterprise. The narrow un-ideal nature of the Russian cannot free itself from its false estimation of the value of money, nor rise to an elevated view of the wants and nature of the times. Money is not, in his eyes, an instrument for the increase of credit and extension of the sphere of operation; the shining metal itself is the one and only object: he can rarely prevail on himself to part with the money once clutched, or incur voluntarily a small loss to ward off a greater. The Russian merchant must in every commercial undertaking grasp an immediate profit, be it ever so small, and will certainly never imitate that American owner of a steamboat, who carried passengers in his vessel for a year together for *nothing*, in order to drive his rivals out of the field. He does not understand the German saying, "Gain time and gain all," still less the English merchant's proverb, "Time is money;" but rather, like the Arabian merchant described by Burkhardt, the Russian will let years pass away in the hope of avoiding a temporary loss, without once calculating how much the delay eats into his capital by keeping it idle. In spite, however, of their false commercial system, the great mass of the worshippers in the temple of the Russian Plutus are wealthy; and, with all their fondness for money, no people bear commercial losses so easily as the Russians. Such a thing as suicide in consequence of failure in trade is never heard of among them, an occurrence but too common among us. This seeming contradiction is to be explained partly by the light temperament of the Russian, and partly by the fact that no Russian merchant considers his honour as a merchant, or his credit as a citizen, at all affected by his failure, simply because such things have no existence for him. "Bay s'nim" (God be with it), he says to his faithless treasure, and begins anew the erection of his card edifice.

The centre on which the Exchange of St. Petersburg moves, the sum that makes the weather, the spring that gives life and motion to all, is an offshoot of that remarkable race, from which for so many centuries the hierarchy of Mammon have had their origin. Baron S —, who in St. Petersburg electrifies the *nervus rerum*, is the Rothschild of Russia, without whose co-operation scarcely any great undertaking can have a beginning. The learned in these matters estimate the value of the light absorbed by this diamond at from 40 to 50 millions. His capital employed in commerce by sea amounts to not less than 30 to 35 millions yearly. Immense sums have been expended by him in the purchase of estates in all parts of Russia, from the capital to the Black sea. His small bright eye, compact Napoleon figure, and old green great-coat, are to be seen daily in the centre of that system round which revolve the lesser planets in the shape of English, German, and French merchants.

This commercial body of St. Petersburg is certainly the most numerous society of respectable and well-informed persons to be met with in Russia, without an order or a knightly cross on their breasts. Except the silver tokens worn by the sworn brokers, and some medals a good pound in weight, carried round the necks of some native merchants, nothing is to be seen but plain coats of black or green; and the contrast between this



unpretending uniformity of appearance, and the gorgeous uniforms of the Russian generals and courtiers, of the academicians and professors, whose gold-embroidered coats glitter with more testimonials of their abundant and superabundant merits than there are Alphas and Betas in Orion, is singular enough, whether pleasing or displeasing depends upon taste.

The assembly, which is by no means in all its elements "gentleman-like," and where an Englishman may feel much silent disgust at the obtrusive Polish Jew, Tartar, or Bokharian, is in the highest degree interesting to one who knows the interior of the country, and can rightly interpret the dumb pantomime, or listen to the long echo that a few words spoken in this hall, finds in the vast countries lying beyond. The broker notes down with a pencil some thousand cwts. of tallow; on either side a nod is given, and sentence of death has gone forth against hundreds of oxen grazing in unconscious innocence in their far father-land. What writing and talking,—what hallooing to herdsmen,—what toil and trouble,—what a waste of breath and sweat of brow,—what scenes of blood and slaughter, will have resulted from that simple nod, before the doomed fat can have found its way to the Neva, and from the Neva through the east, west, and northern seas to London,—till at last, in Dublin or Glasgow, or heaven knows what other corner of the earth, the order is given to John to bring in the candles, when the product of this thousand-fold turmoil wastes away into the all-dissolving element!

"Gospodin Muller and Co. don't you want some of my ship timber, I think you will be satisfied with what I can offer you," says a long-bearded caftan to a German great-coat with both hands in its pockets. "We will try you, Gospodin Paulow. Note down for me 1200 mast timbers first size, 6000 yards, and 3000 score of oak planks 1½ foot broad and two inches thick," answers Muller and Co. without a shadow of a thought of the myriads of wood-pigeons and owls which his reckless commission has driven forth nestless to the four winds of heaven; of the chorus of hamadryads groaning under the strokes of the pitiless axes of the ruthless peasants of Vologda and Viatka. In his inveterately prosaic fancy, does he even dream of the desolation that a few days will cause in those primeval forests, or among the gnomes and sylphs who have rejoiced for ages in their shades? Muller and Co. know and care nothing about it. In a year and a half (for so long it must be before the mighty trees which the merchant's word of power have uprooted from their native soil will find their way through the watery veins of interior Russia) the timber will appear on the Neva: so much will then be put down to the credit, so much to the debit side of the account, due notice will be sent of its arrival in London, and little reckes Muller and Co. what flag shall dare the breeze from those lofty masts, what seas shall be traversed by that timber, what rock shall rend its strong sides asunder, or in what unknown depths of the Antarctic Sea it shall slowly decompose. The hall of the St. Petersburg Exchange is so large that the music of all the regiments of guards might conveniently find an echo there; but it is built for whispers only. What is spoken aloud are trifles: "How is your lady?" "We had a charming day on the Neva." "A's is a good place to dine at." "I think it is more comfortable at B's;" &c. But when a few heads are seen close together, speaking piano, pianissimo, and fencing off the circle so closely with their backs that a mouse could not make its way through, something more important is going on. "It is too much: three thousand"—"four—five"—"twenty

—a hundred thousand"—"October," "November," "London," "Hull," "Baltimore"—"Well, I'll take it"—"It's a bargain, Mr. Curtius."

Mr. Curtius has sold 600 lasts of the finest Tula wheat, 200 lasts of the best linseed, 300 stone of Livonian flax, to Mr. O'Higgins. Those 600 lasts of wheat have imposed heavy burdens upon as many peasant families. With the argument of the stick many a poor Russian was driven to the field on account of that wheat; and many of the hardy little race of horses, so numerous in the north, have sunk at last under the burden of hard work and harder blows. In harvest time all hands were at work day and night—mother and children, girls and boys; the infants screamed unheeded in the damp grass, the sick sighed untended in their huts. All this is nothing to O'Higgins and Curtius, who, leaving the hard-hearted land-owners to make up their account with heaven, are bent only on making up their own with their correspondents in London, where there are always more hungry people than in all Russia taken together; and so at last the crust of bread finds its way to the mouth of the English beggar, who, as he eats it, might thus soliloquize: "If our lordly landholders were not so marble-hearted, and if the St. Petersburg merchant did not require so large a profit for his daughters' equipage and his own wine-cellar, my crust would be a little larger."

Besides bread for the English, wood for the Dutch, tallow for the Scotch, flax and hemp are the two most important articles on the exchange of St. Petersburg; and yet more is shipped from Riga, whose Dwina passes through the very centre of the flax producing countries. The ropes and cords shipped from St. Petersburg are to be found in the smallest shop of the smallest town in Germany. It may be literally asserted that half Europe lies in Russian bonds. A third part of all European chains are forged from Russian iron, from the enormous possessions of the Demidoffs, Jakowleffs, and other Russian grandees, who are masters of whole branches of the Ural mountains. The value of the export of this bulky article, amounts, on an average, to 150 millions of rubles yearly. The tallow makes about a third of the export. After tallow, come linen, linseed, hemp, and cordage, about a fifth; corn as much; iron and copper, about a tenth; hides a twentieth; wood, not much less; and potash and oil in considerable fractions.

The value of foreign merchandise brought to St. Petersburg, in from 1500 to 1700 vessels (half of them English), surpasses that of the native goods destined for exportation, by 30 to 40 millions. This relation of the imports to the exports is correct only in reference to St. Petersburg, as all other Russian ports export incomparably more than they import. Among the chief articles of import are sugar and English cotton goods, these two articles forming nearly one-half; the next in amount is champagne, of which a larger quantity circulates through Russian veins, than through those of any other people.\* St. Petersburg, and that half of the empire which the capital supplies, does not consume so much coffee as the kingdom of Bavaria alone. Tea has almost superseded it. Tobacco is imported to the amount of eight millions, silk four millions, fruit two millions, cheese one million. Many of these articles may appear insignificant in amount, considering the extent of country furnished with them from the capital; an extent comprising one-half of

\* Yearly about 600,000 bottles, which in Russia are sold for 9,000,000 rubles.

the empire; but it is exceedingly large, when we consider that they are destined for the consumption of a few hundred thousand of the opulent classes, who alone enjoy these articles of luxury. On an average, these imports pay 33 per cent. duty, a third of the whole value.

There can be no question, but that if this third, in the shape of duty, were done away with, the trade would be double or triple what it now is. A man in moderate circumstances would live three times as cheap as he does now, millions more would be enabled to partake of these foreign comforts of life, and the raw produce of Russia would be much cheaper, and exported in much greater quantities than it now is. Agriculture, the breeding of cattle, and the growth of timber, would improve the population, the income of the private man would increase, the powers of the soil be augmented, roads and canals would become better, the land would rise in value, the enormous estates would be divided, and even the treasury of the emperor would gain in the end, though it might suffer a little at first.

The unnatural and costly manufactures, which after all are most imperfect in their results, would be given up, and the energies of the people would naturally direct themselves to the improvement of those branches of industry suited to them and to the circumstances of the country.

The whole trade of St. Petersburg with foreign countries employs a yearly capital of about three hundred millions. About seventy-five or eighty millions may be reckoned to the account of the "foreign guests" (*innostranniye gostui*), and the rest (two hundred and twenty millions) to the natives, or subjects of the empire (Russian, German, French, Swedish, &c. &c.). There are several houses in St. Petersburg which turn yearly a capital of from ten to twenty millions, or about one-third of the whole trade of Riga.\* Commerce has increased amazingly in activity during this century, in spite of the oppressive burden of the customs.†

The most active agents between the Neva and foreign lands, during the first half of the last century, were the Dutch; since that time the English. The first ship that entered the port of St. Petersburg was from Holland, the same on board of which Peter the Great studied navigation. It was received with extraordinary marks of honour, and had the privilege conferred on it of bringing whatever cargo it carried, duty free, into the empire. This privilege ceased at the end of the last century, as it was no longer possible to render the old ship sea-worthy. The first vessel that enters in May, like the swallow, announcing spring, after a seven months' winter, is still received with great tokens of joy, and is much favoured. In the first year of its existence, till 1720, St. Petersburg saw only from 12 to 50 ships yearly; from 1720 to 1730, from 100 to 250; from 1730 to 1750, 300 to 400 on an average; and this century 2000. The Ukase of Peter the Great, forbidding importation for the interior through Arkhangel, and another commanding every merchant to ship a third of his merchandise for exportation from the Neva,

\* There are about one hundred and fifty wholesale houses trading beyond sea in St. Petersburg; twenty or twenty-four English, five French, one Spanish, and nearly one hundred German. "The English have the compactest, most solid, and *prettiest* business," as a merchant once observed to me.

† At the close of the last century, from eight hundred to nine hundred vessels entered the port of St. Petersburg yearly. At present nearly two thousand is the number.



have not alone contributed to this rapid advance; a glance at the geographical position of St. Petersburg will convince every one that it must sooner or later have obtained for itself all the advantages that these ukases were intended to confer on it.

The custom-house, at whose quay all vessels not drawing more than nine foot water can conveniently land their cargoes, is to the west of the Exchange, on the lesser Neva, and close to it are enormous magazines, crowded with every species of property. Directly behind the exchange is a large open space fenced with iron-railing, where, the whole year through, and exposed to all changes of the atmosphere, immense quantities of merchandise, even of a kind very liable to injury, such as sugar, are kept in the open air. Throughout all Russia, even in Riga, in the midst of the market-places, we find such rough deposits of wares. The custom probably obtained from the coarse nature of the chief articles of Russian exportation, timber, hides, tallow, leather, &c., for which a mat or a tarred cloth was always a sufficient protection. Here is often to be seen in one yard, under such tarpawlings, and kept from the bare earth merely by planks,—copper, lead, iron, sugar, wine, &c., for months together, exposed to snow, rain, and sunshine; lead enough to kill all the crows in the world, if a three-pounder were wanted for every one of them; sugar enough to sweeten the lake of Ladoga; spice and incense to embalm the whole empire; and the choicest woods of Brazil and the West Indies.

In spring, when the navigation is just opened, a fair of a very peculiar kind is held in the place behind the exchange, and hither, to the considerable profit of many a seaman and trader, throng all classes of society in St. Petersburg, to enjoy a long-looked for pleasure. Here are displayed such foreign productions as are held too insignificant to become regular articles of commerce, and which fall to the lot of the ship's captain and crew. Paroquets and other rare birds, monkeys, baboons, and such like animals, sometimes kept as pets in great houses, splendidly coloured plants from the tropical climates, scream, chatter, and flare together. Here are to be found rare shells for the curious in conchology, strange looking utensils and garments from savage countries, and sometimes a ship-master may be seen leading about a negro-boy, to dispose of, if not exactly as a slave, at least to make a profit of his services, in the house of some person of consequence. After the dead, silent, colourless winter, there is an extraordinary charm in this noisy, gaudy tumult, the first gift of foreign shores to the far northern city; it is like a hansom to a trader commencing business, and the wares go off merrily, particularly the screaming and grimacing portion of them.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### INDUSTRY.

WE have before remarked that in Russia all foreign produce is for the most part vended by foreigners; and that the trade in the arts and manufactures of Western Europe is completely separate from the properly

Russian and oriental traffic. St. Petersburg is, from its position and its privileges, almost the only port which supplies Russia, with jewellery, watches, wines, cloths, laces, silkwares, cotton, &c. Hence there are in St. Petersburg astounding quantities of such articles, and great magazines are formed, which are either really the parent stocks of like establishments in the provincial cities, or are at least the cause of their existence; the dealers, meanwhile, form regular colonies of foreign artisans, foreign artists or traffickers in the productions of foreign art throughout the whole empire; that is to say, through half Europe, and half Asia. From this peculiarity of position, these foreign traders must be regarded not merely as traders, but as in a high degree the servants of civilization, and as such, they enter a society to which they could have no pretension elsewhere; and possessing thus a weight and influence they could not otherwise lay claim to, they deserve in a particular manner the notice of the traveller.

According to the views of the ordinary Russian the whole European world is divided into two parts, into "*Nashe Storona*" (our side) and "*Vashe Storona*" (your side), under which latter denomination he includes all Europe that is not Russian.\*

This other half of Europe he also calls "the foreign land," and has a general idea that all within it is of a superior kind, the people particularly excellent, nature extraordinarily beautiful, the productions of art and industry irreproachable. Thence come those "*Inostranzi*," or foreigners, those wise people, who understand every thing better than he does, and from whom he learns so much.

These *Inostranzi*, whose first appearance by no means dates from Peter I., but who had settlements in different cities of the empire centuries before his time, were always a privileged race, if not by imperial ordinance, as they have been since John Basilovitch, yet by their own superiority. Their freedom dates mostly from Peter the Great and Catherine, and although some attempts have been made since to limit it, yet it may be asserted on the whole, that they enjoy all the privileges of the subject, without sharing his burdens. Without paying taxes, without furnishing recruits, not subject to any guild or corporation, they may work and trade freely from city to city, throughout the whole empire. In our German cities the poor foreigner finds himself horribly restrained in comparison with the native; we may almost say persecuted and oppressed; whilst in Russia it is the foreigner whose privileges are to be envied. Not only private persons, but the authorities, when it is said of any one "*on Inostranez*" (he is a foreigner), think themselves bound to greater civility of demeanour.

"*Ya Inostranez* (I am a foreigner), off with your hat, Russian," says the German, and "I beg your pardon, honourable sir," answers the Russian, and takes his hat off. It is natural enough that an "*Inostranez*" should seek to retain, as long as possible, a predicate which entitles him to such distinctions. The Russian as naturally seeks to incorporate the *inostranzi* with the subjects of the empire. Now and then there appears an edict that all foreigners who have been settled for a certain period in any part of the empire, shall without ceremony swear allegiance to the Russian flag, which puts them all in a fright. As a merchant or an

\*In this sense, a Russian, speaking of a certain professor, a native of Hungary, said to me "You must know him very well, he is from *your side*."

artisan who has not obtained any particular rank ("Tshin") by any service to the state, could not register himself in any other class than that of merchant or citizen, and as such would be liable to military service, the discipline of the stick, and other pleasures of the same kind, every device of course is tried to avoid the sentence. On the appearance of such edicts, some leave the empire for a time, and come back with new passports as newly arrived foreigners; others contrive to procure these passports without leaving the country, or slip through in some other way, and so manage to transmit their privileges to their children, who are also registered as foreigners.

An "Inostranez," if he be only in some degree a man "*comme il faut*," if he can lay aside his German bashfulness, dress well, play at cards, talk nonsense in the right tone, or make a fool of himself in any other decent fashion, may reckon upon being half classed among the nobles throughout Russia, and invited to parties from which in any other country his calling would exclude him. In the interior it is not uncommon to meet the German apothecary's assistants among the dancers at the balls and assemblies of the nobility, and even in St. Petersburg it happens sometimes that a foreign knight of the yard may lead out his partner to the dance in the very same gown which he himself measured out for her some days before. It would be strange if these people did not assume a little upon the strength of these advantages! They drive out with as many horses as the law allows, furnish their cellars with champagne, give balls and card parties which are graced by the presence of court and state counsellors; their daughters aim at the epaulets of colonels and major-generals, and their sons sigh for the daughters of officials and landed proprietors.

Formerly all productions of foreign art or invention were imported; in later years the extraordinary dexterity of the Russian of the lower class, and the very moderate price of his services, have induced the establishment of many Russian manufactures, which the government has sought to protect by many severe prohibitive measures against foreign productions. These new branches of activity are partly the work of foreigners settled in Russia, and favoured by the government, partly of the great landowners, and partly of the immediate influence of the crown.

The landholders have thus turned to account their large unemployed capital of money—and *serfs*, and established manufactories on their own ground, under the management of their own slaves. Many branches of industry have become so much practised in the villages of the greater landholders, that many merely corn-producing hamlets have been changed into large manufactories. Some of the peasants, not content to work only in their lord's manufactory, carry on spinning, weaving, grinding, and pressing on their own account, and have thus grown into persons of property. The well-known iron-forging villages belonging to the family of Sheremetieff, where some of the artisan peasants have become millionaires, are not alone in this respect. All the fairs and markets of interior Russia are flooded with paper, iron goods, cups, tea-pots, &c. of the Demidoffs, Jakowsleffs, Karpzoffs, &c. The wares are, however, below mediocrity in quality, although in outward appearance, particularly where show and gilding are required, they are close imitations of foreign workmanships. Those who understand the articles know these Russo-European manufactures at once by their plausible exterior, coupled with their utter worth-



lessness in essential points. Their imitation of oriental workmanship on the other hand, is extraordinarily good of its kind.

These mighty influential manufacturing aristocrats are in many cases the great obstacles to the improvement of the manufactures by means of smaller but more skilful producers, who are now quite shut out from competition by the privileged monopolists. In this respect the Russian aristocracy stand in the same relation to the manufacturing industry, as the English aristocracy do to the agricultural. In England, where the importation of raw produce is so greatly needed, the sole proprietorship of the soil by the powerful aristocracy not only makes bread dear, but prevents the improvement of agriculture. In Russia, where there is a superfluity of raw produce, but a want of manufactures, the aristocracy manufacturing for themselves have demanded a high tax on the foreign article, and, partly because their social position gives them a natural preponderance, partly because for the advancement of some particular branch of industry they unite to obtain monopolies from their government, a bar is placed to the invention and acquisition of the other classes, who moreover must pay much dearer for the necessary manufactures on that very account.

St. Petersburg reckons within its walls, and in its neighbourhood, the largest and most magnificent industrial establishments, particularly those which produce the more unusual and costly articles, and the workmanship is infinitely superior to any thing that has hitherto been produced in other parts of Russia. Among them may be enumerated the cotton-spinning, cotton-printing, dyeing, glass and looking-glass manufactories, the cannon foundries, the Gobelin tapestry establishment, and those for cutting and polishing precious stones, paper and fire-arms. All these are the property either of foreigners or of the crown, under the management of foreigners, and serve as patterns and examples to the whole empire.

All these establishments are readily shown to strangers; partly because, as they are only imitations of what has long been known in other countries, they contain no mystery, and partly because Russian hospitality does not readily allow them to refuse the request of a foreigner. Hence many a thing, in this distant region, becomes known to the curious stranger, that has been churlishly hidden from him in his native land.

It is characteristic of Russia, which possessed universities before it had schools, that establishments for the manufacture of costly carpets should be thought of before they had learned to spin cotton. The "Spalernoi manufactory," where the Gobelin tapestry is made, is the oldest in St. Petersburg, as the academy founded by Peter the First is the oldest school. In Peter's time, the workmen were one and all French and Italians. Within the last fifty years they have been all Russians, the Director, of course, excepted, who is an Italian, and the designer a Frenchman. The establishment is recruited from the great Foundling Hospital, which gives yearly a certain number of boys, who are taught weaving and drawing in the house, and gradually work themselves up to sub-masters and masters.

Ordinary carpets are made here for sale, but the real Gobelin tapestry is destined for the court alone. The opulence of the Russian court in palaces creates a constant demand for these productions, which are also often sent as presents to Asiatic and European potentates. In 1836 there were in the manufactory 24 masters and under masters, 52 workmen, and as many apprentices; it is, perhaps, the largest existing establishment for

this branch of industry, which is now rather out of fashion in other parts of the world.

The little boys work at high frames, first at leaves and flowers in one colour; then they advance to shaded and veined leaves with several colours, then to stars, arabesques, and so on. Their work is one of the most tedious in the world. The drawings are placed directly behind perpendicular threads, and while the outline of the picture is traced with a black coal, it is transferred to the threads and the limits of the different tints marked out. Every three or four weeks, papers are fastened over the web, and as it is finished it is rolled up, that it may not be injured during the tedious process of manufacture. We saw several magnificent pictures finished. Among others, Peter the Great and his consort, like oil paintings in gold frames; on Catherine's, which was valued at 6000 rubles, were the words, "*Natshatoye sobershayet*," (The Begun—she completed). The workmanship of the precious stones in the crown and sceptre of the empress was perfect; it was wonderful to see how exactly the soft lustrous gleam of the pearls, the splendour of the gold, and the fire of the precious stones, were represented in coloured threads. Here and there, for the high lights, silk had been introduced, and then again to render the soft vanishing of the tints, the wool was scraped, and a downy velvet-like surface given to the web. It is certain that with this kind of pictorial representation, effects may be produced beyond the power of the brush, either in oil or water-colours. This was particularly remarkable in a great picture representing the well-known incident of Peter the Great overtaken by a storm on the lake of Ladoga, and bidding the terrified steersman, "trust in God and him." The force of the dark colours, the fullness of light and shade, the tone and power of the whole, are astonishing. Another picture was a copy of one in the Hermitage, "Alexander the Great in the tent of Darius's mother;" and a smaller one after Gerard Dow, displayed the capabilities of this art in the cabinet and miniature style. In these, silk, flax, and wool were employed; the brightness of the silk, the neutral effects of the flax, and the power of the wool, all rendered their several services. This woven painting, if not so enduring, is much richer than mosaic, which it resembles more nearly than it does any thing else.

The Petersburgers carry the use of looking-glasses to a high pitch of luxury. The houses and their colossal windows, that make them look like crystal palaces, have been before mentioned. In garden pavilions, a whole wall is sometimes composed of glass, behind which the ladies sit like so many Princesses Snow-drop in the fairy tale. In private houses the bare walls are likewise covered with enormous looking-glasses instead of pictures, as with us: presenting at every turn the picture most admired by many,—that of their own persons. The greater part, or rather all these glasses, come from the imperial manufactory, which is also a manufactory for cutting and blowing glass. It is situate with its extensive supplementary buildings, and villages for the workmen belonging to it, in the neighbourhood of the Alexander Nevsky cloister. In the magazines of the factory there are stores of looking-glasses of various magnitudes, such as are hardly to be met with elsewhere; among them, not as any thing unusual, but as glasses for ordinary sale, are some eight feet wide, fifteen feet long, and an inch and a half thick. Venus and Diana, with their retinue, had they not the clear brooks and smooth lakes of Greece, might envy the St. Petersburg beauties. The manufactory itself, however, as well as its productions,

is to be looked upon more as an article of luxury than as the milch cow that a manufactory ought to be, for so many failures occur among these gigantic fragilities, that the profit on them can be but small. More is probably gained on the smaller articles, such as the very curiously cut glass eggs, which are used as Easter presents, and the "Nargiles" (water vases), through which the Eastern smoker loves to cool the fumes of his tobacco. Of these the Persians sometimes purchase to the amount of 50,000 rubles, and more. These fragile wares have (by the way) to be transported *by land* from five to six hundred (German) miles, which could not take place any where but in transport-loving Russia.

The glass-cutting department is perhaps the largest in the world; there are not less than three hundred workmen employed in this screeching, scratching, crushing, cracking, crashing, detestable labour. If the torture to which the ears of the workmen are subjected, the whole day long, does not totally deaden them to all harmony, a song, after their work is over, must be a heavenly enjoyment. It is singular enough that this manufactory should excel less in the fineness and accuracy of the cutting, than in the boldness and dexterity with which castings on a large scale are executed. Much work is done here for the Russian churches, in which balustrades and frameworks of glass are greatly in fashion.

The following anecdote of the inventive spirit of a Russian was related to me.

The emperor wished to illuminate the Alexander column in a grand style; the size of the round lamps was indicated, and the glasses bespoken at this manufactory, where the workmen exerted themselves in vain, and almost blew the breath out of their bodies in the endeavour to obtain the desired magnitude. The commission must be executed, that was self-evident; but how? A great premium was offered to whoever should solve this problem. Again the human bellows toiled and puffed, their object seemed unattainable; when at last a long-bearded Russian stepped forward, and declared that he could do it; he had strong and sound lungs, he would only rince his mouth first with a little cold water to refresh them. He applied his mouth to the pipe, and puffed to such purpose that the vitreous ball swelled and swelled nearly to the required dimensions, up to it, beyond it. "Hold, hold," cried the lookers on, "you are doing too much, and how did you do it at all?" "The matter is simple enough," answered the long-beard; "but first, where is my premium?" And when he had clutched the promised bounty he explained. He had retained some of the water in his mouth, which had passed thence into the glowing ball, and there becoming steam, had rendered him this good service.

It is a known fact, that some of the transplanted branches of industry have attained a higher degree of perfection in Russia, than in the country whence they were brought. Sealing-wax is one of these, which can no where, out of England, be obtained better than in Russia. The same may perhaps be said of the paper from the Peterhof manufactory.

When the Emperor Alexander was in England, in 1815, he invited English paper manufacturers to Russia, who formed this establishment, for which they brought the necessary machinery from their own country. Not less than 70,000 reams of paper, of all sorts, the finer particularly, are made here yearly. The coarser kinds are abundantly furnished by the inland manufactories. All the most delicate and daintiest materials



that lovers or ladies can desire, whereon to waft their compliments and sighs, are here to be had in abundance and in immense variety.

The Russians greatly esteem an elegant handwriting, and like to have paper and envelope worthy of it. The queer shaped, scrawled, and smeared epistles that sometimes pass through the German post, are never seen in the hands of a Russian. The workmen, 800 in number, are supplied from the Foundling Hospital, all dressed in snow-white, like so many cooks, with paper caps of their own fancy on their heads. The execution of the English machines is like witchcraft; thrown in at one side a slimy chaos, the matter comes out firm and perfect paper at the other. We were told in the manufactory, that Russia had already been able to acknowledge her obligations to England, by sending thither no small quantity of paper. It is also sent to America.

Under the same roof with the paper manufactory, is the imperial establishment for the cutting and polishing of precious stones. The wealth of the Ural and Altai mountains in these costly articles, and the active search for them, are likely to increase the amount of labour performed in this establishment. In no court in the world are such quantities of jewels employed as in the Russian. The number of orders and crosses worn on the uniforms of the nobles leads already to an enormous consumption. Still greater is that caused by the rings, bracelets, and other ornaments lavished as marks of imperial favour. The emperor and empress scarcely go any where without leaving behind them some testimonies of satisfaction in the shape of jewels; reversing the eastern custom, where the smaller must pay this homage to the greater luminary. When they travel, a jewel casket, destined for this purpose, and which rarely comes back unemptied, is always among their baggage. If these gifts were always faithfully preserved, and not turned into money again, as they generally are, all the diamond mines of Brasil and the east would not be able to supply the constant demand.

The most beautiful and the most peculiar objects here produced, however, are the large and magnificent malachite vases, the material for which is yielded by Siberia. Nowhere else is this beautiful substance found in such large and pure masses; some of these vases are valued at a hundred thousand rubles.

Some very splendid specimens of vases of this kind are also afforded by the imperial porcelain manufactory, which, however, vies less than any other with similar establishments in other countries. It is situate near Alexandrovsk, where there is also an iron-foundry. The latter is erected in a style of great elegance, but yields in the excellence of workmanship to an establishment of the same kind in St. Petersburg, belonging to an Englishman of the name of Bearth. Even the government finds it necessary to entrust any important commission, not to its own manufactory, but to Mr. Bearth's.

The vast and important establishments of this Englishman are behind the new Admiralty, where there are a sugar refinery, works for cutting timber, and the iron-foundry. For the transport of the raw material, and the completed work, as well as for the ten steam-boats which Mr. Bearth owns, and which are employed as passage-boats between Cronstadt and St. Petersburg, he has constructed a harbour on his own account. Several steam-engines are employed in cutting the timber; and in order that planks may be furnished to meet the demand at all times of the year, the

canal in which the beams float is heated in winter by steam-pipes, that the water may never freeze. The whole year through, the greedy saw is at work, demolishing what in the forests of Mordwina and Viatka was the production of centuries; and countless are the numbers of planks destined to spring beneath the feet of the dance-loving beauties of St. Petersburg, till the red light on the steeples of St. Petersburg announces their end in one of the numerous conflagrations of the city.

The sugar-refinery is not shown to any one, because the immense consumption of Mr. Bearth's sugar is the result of the employment of some substitute for bullock's-blood in the purification of the sugar, and the nature of this substitute is a secret. The pious scruples of the Russians were carried to so extravagant a pitch, that they renounced the use of sugar during their fasts, on account of the small quantity of animal substance used in the refining. No sugar but that bearing the stamp of Bearth is ever seen on the table during the fasts, because none of the forbidden animal juice is employed in its fabrication. It is used, therefore, throughout Russia, on the Steppes of the south, and in the sterile neighbourhood of the Obi and the Irtysh, where it fetches a most astounding price.

The largest cotton-spinning establishment in the city was erected a few years ago by Baron Stieglitz. It is worked by an enormous English steam-engine of 110 horse power, the largest of the kind in the east of Europe, and must give the people from east Europe and Asia who throng to St. Petersburg, a marvellous idea of the inventive genius of the English, and of the boldness of the human spirit. Let any one think for a moment of 110 labouring horses, with their 440 weary legs, the smacking of whips, the clatter and jingle of the harness, and the waste of breath in bawling and cursing, and then come and admire the grand and simple motion of the steam-engine, the gentle, easy, noiseless movement of its oil-smeared giant arms. The machine stands in a great hall, with cast-iron balustrades and steps around, from which one can admire at leisure the superb play of the muscles of this mighty iron man.

The director is Mr. Greig, an Englishman, from whom we wished to obtain permission to inspect the manufactory. In vain we inquired for him; no one knew any such person. "Had we permission from Mr. Feodor Rovanovitsch?" (Frederick Robert's son.) Luckily, Feodor Rovanovitsch, who was no other than the elegantly-dressed Mr. Greig himself, and whose family name the Russian, as usual, knew nothing about, entered at that moment, and was kind enough to show us the place himself. The fresh and healthy exterior of the workmen compared with the depraved, miserable, sickly appearance of the manufacturing population in France, Belgium, and Germany, was striking. The light-tempered Russian never remains so long in one kind of employment as to be injured by it. Neither is the tyranny of the master-manufacturers so systematic here as in other countries.

The most important manufactory on the Viborg side is conducted by a German, who related many interesting anecdotes of the various nations who had representatives among his 1000 workmen. He made use of the Finns wherever much patience and little movement was required, where knots and entanglement required a gentle finger; but the Russians, who are apt to untie knots after the fashion of Alexander the Great, were mostly employed where speed and activity were wanting. He further

told us that nearly half of his workmen were employed in giving to cloths, Manchester cottons, &c., a brighter and more showy outside, without which the Russians and people of Asia do not value them. The finest goods are subjected to rough handling for this purpose, and literally go through fire and water, to the great injury, one would think, of their intrinsic worth.

Within the last ten years, establishments for making mathematical instruments have been founded by German mechanicians. I saw the workshop of one, where sixteen journeymen were employed; four were placed there as apprentices by the crown. It is worthy of remark, that many parts of the instruments were worked in platina, which metal the Russians need not be sparing of, and which will one day obtain a decided preference for their instruments.

For the fashionable world, one of the grandest establishments to be seen any where is the so-called English magazine. It was begun many years ago by some English people, and hence its name, though neither the proprietors nor all the goods are any longer English. One apartment is devoted to jewellery of all kinds, and of a splendour and abundance rarely seen in a royal collection. Another contains every possible requisite of the *toilette*, for which an active correspondence is kept up with Paris, London, and Vienna, to obtain the newest and best from those centres of fashion. As it is decreed by the world of fashion, that nothing is good or wearable but what is bought here, all sorts of things are sold, the rarest and the commonest; from diamonds of the first water, down to shoe-blackening, which last article is so elegantly put up, that the wealthiest prince need not disdain to put it in his pocket.

A great part of these wares are now made in St. Petersburg. The proprietors keep a multitude of foreign artists and workmen in their pay, who work for them alone, and thus the credit of the magazine is maintained, and the things pass for foreign, though the public very well know that not half the things labelled as from Paris or London ever saw either Paris or London.

The prices of the goods sold in this shop are enormous, and would appear ridiculous in any other city. Here, where money is but little valued, many a one is glad enough to be rid of his useless bank-notes in exchange for some pretty thing that pleases his fancy for a time at least, and when the shopkeeper assures his patrons that he has sold every thing at the lowest possible price, and only so low because they are constant customers, they are goodnatured enough to believe him. When we consider, however, that the people behind the counter are *gentlemen* who can answer in every language in Europe; that the magazine pays 1000 rubles rent for every window, and that every bronze lamp that remains half a year unsold may be said to cost 100 rubles merely for warehouse-room, the prices demanded will appear less extravagant.

The furniture magazine of Gamb, a very celebrated one of its kind, was founded by a simple Swabian carpenter of that name, but, as in Russia, every workshop easily becomes a manufactory; his three sons, who are only his successors, elegant young St. Petersburgers, carry on the business wholesale, and keep fifty or sixty cabinet-makers constantly employed, besides many sculptors, carvers in wood, painters, and designers. In their magazine, goods are displayed to the value of millions; some of the rooms, a thing particularly desirable in Russia, are filled with portable household



furniture of every description for the use of travellers. Here are complete beds, bedsteads, and every thing else packed in chests four-and-a-half feet long, three-quarters of a foot wide, and four inches high; a tent with chairs, tables, and every accommodation for sitting, lying, dining, or sleeping, all packed up in one chest. The proprietors have naturally become inventive in this branch; for the spoiled children of fortune are continually leaving luxurious St. Petersburg for the steppes of the Pontus, for the inhospitable Caucasus, or the Siberian deserts, and are glad to be able to take with them some of the accustomed conveniences of civilized life packed up among their luggage.

The only kind of *bergère* that the Messrs. Gamb have excluded from their magazine is that in which man enjoys the softest and most undisturbed of all slumbers—his coffin. Many other magazines furnish them in abundance. These melancholy commodities are piled up by hundreds for all religions, ranks, and ages; black with golden crosses for the protestants; brown and light colours for the Russians of the Greek church; small rose-coloured ones, with white lace, for young girls; azure blue for boys. As the dead are always laid out immediately in Russia, coffins must be kept ready made, and in considerable numbers, to afford a choice.

There are about 250 wine and beer cellars in St. Petersburg. Those only frequented by the lower classes have any thing interesting or characteristic about them. Here are sold beer, mead, spirituous liquors, and bad wine, and here also people say what they think of themselves and of the pictures that adorn the walls. These pictures offer the stranger many facilities for studying the national character of the Russians. In the most glaring colours are represented the ideas of the lower-classes on the most important subjects of human thought; the Deity, heaven, hell, the soul, and the creation of the world, without some reference to which, steeped as they are in fanaticism and ascetic practices, they would not venture even to swallow a mouthful of beer. These kind of tap-rooms are usually papered with such pictures like a show-box. The study of them is the more interesting because they are in general very old, and with many of them not the slightest deviation from old established types is ever permitted. They are generally the production of the church painters of Moscow and Kieff, in which cities, under the shadow of the most ancient and most sacred temples of Russia, this kindred branch of industry is still in high preservation, and the fancy they display is exceedingly lively and orientally grotesque. You may see, for example, the day of creation depicted on an enormous scale. On the upper part Chaos is represented by dark, vigorous strokes; morass, water, and unformed masses of rock in fearful confusion; over it lowers a thick dark cloud, made palpable by a single stroke of the brush; in the midst hovers the Creator under the physiognomy of a Russian priest, from whose mouth proceeds the creative, "Be thou," scrawled in the old Slavonian character; and beneath it the sun and the stars glide out of Chaos, the sun closely resembling a Medusa's head, attended by the moon and the seven greater planets. By every star its name is written in the Slavonian character. All the other stars are running after a solid blue beam, which represents the firmament. They revolve, sun and all, about the earth, of which a portion, the Garden of Eden, is indicated on the lower part of the canvass, and on it smiles the sun, his rays indicated by a multitude of yellow stripes crossing one another. On either side over Paradise, clouds

are heaped; from one half fall thick spots as black as ink, near which is written, "rain," and out of the other an equally generous allowance of white dabs, with "snow," written in great letters on the other side; for a Russian can hardly picture to himself Paradise without snow. Round about Paradise runs a garland of mountains, some of whose summits reach the stars. The less a Russian knows of mountains, the more liberally his fancy paints them. The edges of the mountains are abundantly sprinkled with flowers, of every colour of the rainbow, and almost as big as the mountains themselves. Between every two flowers stands regularly a tree, the tree sometimes overshadowing the flowers, and sometimes the flowers overshadowing the tree, and near them several times inscribed the words, "the blooming flowers, the blooming flowers." In the middle of the garden, Adam and Eve are kneeling, a Russian and his wife; close to them, a fountain, breathed on by two swollen-cheeked cherub-heads, signifying the air, and dancing over it, a gigantic will-o'-the-wisp indicating fire. All around, in the tumultuous excitement of creation's dawn, all the creatures of nature and fancy seem to be bellowing; all the birds, real and unreal, the elephant, the lion, the unicorn, the seducing serpent, the leviathan, the hare, the carp, the fish of Jonas, the four beasts of the Apocalypse, rats and mice. The whole picture is in a frame of arabesques of wreaths and heads of saints and angels.

In this style all the pictures are done. Mount Athos, so renowned in the Russian Greek church, is never represented with less than a hundred and fifty churches and convents on it, and every church has at least a dozen cupolas. When Mount Sinai is represented, it is like Pelion on Ossa, and Ossa on Olympus; a column of mountains with an exceedingly pointed summit reaching to Sirius with Moses on the top.

Among the many things to interest strangers in St. Petersburg, the booksellers' shops are not the most unimportant. The firm of Brieff and Gräfe is the oldest of the German houses, by whom the greater part of the German and French books that have appeared in Russia have been published. The first Russian bookseller is decidedly Smirdin. One cannot but be astonished at the rich assortment which Russian literature has already enabled him to offer, and at the elegant style in which they are got up. Perhaps at no time was such miserable paper, such detestable type, and such a measureless want of taste and accuracy in printing, to be met with in Russia, as we formerly saw, and do yet occasionally see in Germany. Since the commencement of this century, however, Russia has made such rapid advances that the modern productions may stand a comparison with those of any nation. Russian books are generally printed on a very firm paper in a very large type, but there are some 12mos and 16mos which leave nothing to be desired in point of neatness and elegance. Books from Smirdin's press may now venture to show their faces boldly in the boudoirs of the most fastidious ladies, by the side of the choicest productions of London and Paris and the time is long gone by when a Russian nobleman could only allow a Russian book to stand here and there in the dust of the lowest shelves, in his almost exclusively French library. It is not only by the extent, however, of the booksellers' stocks in St. Petersburg and Moscow, where there are shops containing upwards of 100,000 volumes, that we may estimate the extraordinary advance of Russian literature; the prices given to favourite authors, afford also a good criterion. There are Russian authors who have realized estates of many square miles out

of their inkstands; some have received 5000 or 6000 rubles, merely to lend their names to a journal, and there are periodicals that count not less than 20,000 subscribers. The greatest new work in hand is the National Encyclopedia, which pays as much as 100 and 200 rubles a sheet to its contributors, and must reckon, therefore, on a tolerably large circulation. Russian literature is now strong enough in pinion to soar on a level with that of France, if not to take a flight above it, in the estimation of the best native circles.

German literature is somewhat in a dilemma between the newly kindled inspiration of the Russian, and the old preference for French literature, to say nothing of the Anglomania, that is beginning to make itself felt on the banks of the Neva. There was a time in St. Petersburg, when the enthusiasm for German poetry was not confined within the limits of the German colony, every rising talent was hailed with pleasure, and the spring eagerly looked for that should bring over some new production of Schiller, Göthe, or Wieland. There were persons at the court who had these names constantly in their mouths, and it is still delightful to a German to hear a Russian speak with enthusiasm on the brilliant dawn of German poetry. It is undeniable that the study of the German language was advancing even very lately in Russia. The growing dislike for the French since 1812, has allowed more German teachers to appear, and in some of the public schools the German language is a regular branch of study. In public and private libraries, the German names and character are still frequently found mingled with the Roman and Slavonian. They are generally, however, the classic names in German literature only. The Russians look upon our literature as dead, and know nothing of the productions of the present time. Even the German part of the population trouble themselves but little to procure what is new in their native land. This may be attributed to many causes; to the worldly prosperity in which they all rejoice, to their lessened sympathy with German literature by the necessity they are under of mastering the Russian language and books, to fashion, and to the habit of speaking French with the Russians, and discussing with them the merits of the ephemeral productions of the French press.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE TABLE AND KITCHEN.

It is a certain fact that the people of Crete to this day roast their goats-flesh exactly as that was roasted which cheered the fainting soul of the much enduring Ulysses after his storm-tossed passage thither. The Pillow, the well-known tower of rice and mutton, the centre dish even now of the oriental table, smoked on the boards of the Persian and Parthian in the times of the Greeks and the Romans, and there can be no doubt that many a Babylonian stone and marble tower will yet rise and fall in those countries, before the towers of rice will be overthrown. There are certainly many animals and vegetables, and consequently many dishes which have



been introduced into lands where they were before unknown, and have thus revolutionized their kitchens. Coffee, potatoes, and maize in Europe, and the spread of our horned cattle in America are the most striking examples of this. Among beverages, tea, wine, and spirituous distillations have also their claims to historical consideration. Nevertheless, taken on the whole, all nations cling with extraordinary tenacity and constancy to their old customs and their old culinary faith, as to their traditions, and myths, and old nurse's stories; nay, as the examples already referred to prove, the system of cookery often survives systems of religion, and political constitutions fall, while the institutions of the kitchen maintain their ground.

There is a town in Germany, in which, on high festival-days a certain cake is prepared, called a krull-cake. These cakes are mentioned in the oldest chronicles of the city, in narrating the choice of a *Bürgermeister*, or some such occurrence. It is recorded in "Platt Deutsch," that they held a counsel and eat krull-cakes. The city was then catholic. Three hundred years ago, it became protestant, but to the old faith in krull-cakes it has adhered. The inhabitants dressed formerly in the old Spanish costume; that gradually gave way to the French, but the krull-cakes held their ground, and the Gallic-clad senators munched as the Spanish had done. At a later period, the city lost all its old constitution, as part of the Germanic body, and was incorporated with France, and thus the men became outwardly and inwardly another people, spoke another language, wore other clothing, and thought other thoughts. But to this day they bake and eat krull-cakes, as their blessed forefathers did before them, though perhaps they do not resemble them in any other particular. These are things that seem to have escaped the observation and research of philosophers more than any other kind of phenomenon.

To make krull-cakes, fine sifted wheat or flour is taken, skimmed-milk, so many eggs, and certain spices, the dough is put into an iron mould, and toasted at a gentle fire. In this recipe so much seems arbitrary, that one would expect continual change. On the contrary, the fashion of the cake has survived the storms of centuries, and seems to possess a constant power of self-reproduction, like plants and minerals.

The preparation of many kinds of food is maintained in certain forms by religious and political laws, as the unleavened bread of the Jews, which is in form, taste, and essence, the same as it was in the time of Moses. That is intelligible; but how is the fashion of cookery maintained without any such aid. Strabo mentions certain flat-pressed sausages of pigs-meat, that were favourite articles of food with the people of Byzantium. Byzantium has since been Roman, Greek, Latin, Turkish, and is about to become Russian, and those flat-sausages exist yet in Constantinople, and are carried thence into the neighbouring provinces. So it was, in Strabo's time, the custom, in certain provinces by the Black Sea, to cut beef into long strips and dry it in the air to preserve it. These customs did not certainly arise from any natural necessity, for there are many countries quite as dry, and where there is a still greater want of fuel, where the custom never prevailed, but on the Black Sea it prevails to this day.

The character of many a nation depends certainly, in no small degree, on the food which the country yields, and, on the other hand, the character of the nation as certainly operates on the choice and preparation of its food. Certain inclinations to certain kinds of food, may also be traced among different nations. Swine's flesh was at all times an abomination

to the Arabians; and the aversion of the Jew to pork, would alone suffice to show him of Arabian origin. The Germanic nations have always held beef in favour, and they alone know how to prepare it, so as to make it savoury and nutritive. In Germany as in England, in Sweden as in Norway and Denmark, the German blood announces itself by this unfailling test. The Roman nations, the French, the Spaniards, and the Italians, have all something in common in their kitchen, as in their language and history.

The chief national dish of the Russians is their "Shtshee," which, as far as the Russian name extends, neither moral nor political revolution has ever driven from their table, or their hearts. It is seen on the board of the serf, and is constantly to be found at the tables of the rich, where it maintains its place amid the ragouts and pasties of France. One can hardly believe, when the Russian in a foreign land is heard to lament in a strain of pathetic eloquence the loss of his "shtshee," or when one hears in Riga, that the three mightiest gods of the Russian nation, are Tshin, Tshai, and Shtshee, (rank, tea, and cabbage-soup,)—one can scarcely believe, I say, that the beloved shtshee, is simply cabbage-soup, and neither more nor less—but so it is; shtshee and shtshee again is the staff of life with all the people living between Kamtshatka and the Prussian frontier; indeed, the bones, nerves, muscles, and flesh of the great majority of the Russians, may be looked upon in some sort as the solid essence of shtshee. Forty millions of human beings put up their daily prayer for their daily shtshee. It is the main subsistence of the mighty Russian army, consisting of a million of fighting men. Wherever the Russian comes as a settler, or as a conqueror, in the Baltic provinces, in Finland, in the lands of Tartary, at the foot of the Caucasian or the Altai mountains, be assured he will not fail to lay out a mighty cabbage-garden, wherewith to gladden his stomach with the much beloved shtshee.

The mode of preparing this remarkable dish varies greatly, and there are almost as many kinds of shtshee as of cabbages. Six or seven heads of cabbage chopped up, half a pound of barley-meal, a quarter of a pound of butter, a handful of salt, and two pounds of mutton cut into small pieces, with a can or two of "Kwas," make an excellent shtshee. With the very poor, the butter and the meat are of course left out, which reduces the composition to the cabbage and the kwas. In the houses of the wealthy, on the contrary, many ingredients are added, and rules laid down to be closely observed; "bouillon" is used instead of kwas, the meat is salted and pressed for six-and-thirty hours, and is put raw to the already boiling cabbage; thick cream is added, and the whole mixture when complete is pronounced unsurpassably excellent.

The second dish in importance is the "Posdnoi Shtshee" or "Fasting Shtshee," in which fish is used instead of meat, oil instead of butter, &c. The lower classes eat it usually with a kind of fish not larger than a sprat boiled skin and all to a pap, and to give it additional flavour, a portion of thick oil is added.

"Botvinya" is another right Russian dish, and nearly akin to shtshee. The latter is the staple of the Russian table the whole year through; but "Botvinya" is only eaten in the summer. The ingredients, which are warm in the shtshee, are put cold into the botvinya, cold kwas, raw herbs, red berries, chopped cucumbers, and lastly, salmon or some other fish cut into square lumps. At the better tables, slices of lemon

are sometimes added, toasted blackbread cut small, and to make it yet cooler small lumps of ice. This is the famous "Botvinya," and if any one be at a loss to imagine how these can all agree with the "kwas" (thin beer) in which they swim about, let him by all means come to Russia, and eat of the dish for a few years, when no doubt he will find the ingredients all equally good and harmonious.

Perhaps the climate of Russia, where the summer is always excessively hot, as the winter always excessively cold, is the cause of the decided and strictly maintained distinctions between the summer and the winter *cuisine*. Every season has its own soup, its own poultry, its own pastry. To many, a positive date for their enjoyment may be given. Fruit comes in on the 8th of August, ice on Easter Sunday. Religion, which has much to do with the Russian table, prohibits the eating of certain articles of food before a certain day. Saturday's dishes differ throughout the whole country from Sunday's; Friday and Wednesday, as fast-days, have other food prescribed than Monday and Thursday. It is all one, in Germany, what food is set before the guests at a funeral; in Russia, it must be a kind of rice-soup, with plums and raisins. The cake broken over the head of the newly-born child, is of a particular kind. Weddings, betrothments, &c., have all their appointed dishes, and it must not be forgotten that these household regulations hold good for not less than 300,000 German square miles, and forty millions of people.

Meat is almost always eaten by the Russians (we speak of the great bulk of the people), either boiled, pickled, or salted; they seldom smoke meat, not even their hams and bacon; roasting is almost unknown to them. It is incredible how bad the bread is, considering the goodness of the corn; it is all, more or less sour, and why this is so, is not easy to discover. Another fault is that it is never sufficiently baked, but that is characteristic of a people who choose to eat more unripe than ripe fruit. It were easy to leave their fruit a little longer on the tree, their bread a little longer in the oven, but that is never done. Pasties of all kinds (pirogas) are in great favour with the Russian; things so little known in Germany that we have not even a word for them. The Russians pack every thing that can be chopped up, into pies; vegetables, fruit, mushrooms, flesh, and fish; the paste is generally detestable.

It must be very gratifying to the author of a Russian cookery-book to think that his sphere of influence is so extensive. For example, if he speak of "blinnis," and say it is a kind of pancake eaten with caviare, and port-wine, in the "butter-week," as it is called, before the great fast; he is unquestionably rewarded for his trouble by the reflection that the whole empire is suffering from indigestion at the same time. So great a uniformity in eating must partly cause, and partly presuppose, a great uniformity of moral and physical constitution.

If the inward character, and the mysterious nature of the veiled Psyche of a nation, speaks not less intelligibly in the productions of its kitchen, than in the productions of any other art, it may not be superfluous to mention the great preference the Russians show for all kinds of food that can be grated and mashed up. It is as if food in a solid form were unbearable to the Russian or he too lazy to chew! Every thing must melt in his mouth, and find its way to the maze within him, without any trouble on his part. An energetic active people like to crunch and bite! What were their teeth for else? The Russians may indeed quote the gods of



Greece as their patterns, for doubtless the ambrosia of Olympus must have been something of the consistence of their much loved "Kissels" and "Pastelas;" for, if on the one hand we cannot suppose ambrosia to have been a liquid soup, to be conveyed with spoons to the expectant mouths of the immortals; on the other hand, it cannot have been a hard tooth-exercising substance, for mastication is something exceedingly un-ideal, and inconsistent with godlike attributes.

The quantity of sweetmeats, wet and dry, consumed at a Russian festival is perfectly astonishing; for balls they are bought by the pood (36 lbs. English), and many a merchant's wife, if she be rich enough, consumes half her life in eating sugar, which in one kind of preparation or another, is crunched, sucked, and swallowed all day long.

Of liquids, the most national and most general is kwas, which occupies the same place as a beverage, that shtshee does as a dish. The Russian of the lower class can no more live without kwas, than fish without water. It is not only his constant drink, but the foundation of all his soups and sauces, which are rarely made with simple water, but almost always with kwas. Kwas is the basis of all his food, solid and liquid; in kwas all things dissolve and swim; even on the tables of the wealthiest, among the wines and liqueurs, instead of decanters of water appear decanters of kwas. Fortunately it is a light and wholesome beverage. It is prepared in the following manner: A pailful of water is put into an earthen vessel, into which, are shaken two pounds of barley-meal, half-a-pound of salt, and a pound-and-a-half of honey. This mixture is put in the evening into a kind of oven, with a moderate fire, and constantly stirred; in the morning it is left for a time to settle, and then the clear liquid is poured off. The kwas is then ready, and may be drunk in a few days; in a week it is at its highest perfection. As kwas is thought good only when prepared in small quantities, and in small vessels, every household brews for itself. In great houses, a servant is kept for this purpose, who finds in it wherewithal to occupy him the whole day, and has as many mysterious observances in the preparation, as if it were a spell, or as if there were as much significance in his labours as in those of Schiller's bell-founder.

Mead is another national and very ancient Slavonian beverage. In former times it was the only spirituous liquor of the Russians; but wine with the higher, and brandy with the lower classes, had superseded it in a great measure. Of late, however, it seems to be recovering some degree of favour; perhaps the active research into the annals of Russia, and the reviving spirit of nationality, may be among the causes.

Brandy is now with all the Slavonian nations so powerful a deity, that in the sense in which it is said, "gold rules the world," it may be added, and "brandy rules the Russians." The usual reward, the usual bribe, for the ordinary Russian, is not money but brandy. The common people do not care half so much for money; no festival, no Easter, no Christmas without brandy; brandy must urge the labourer to work, and the warrior to battle. It is amazing how greedy they are of this fiery poison. Brandy is with the Russian a foreign innovation; but they have found a national name for it, and call it "Vodka," the little water; there is a fine poetical play of fancy implied in this loving diminutive. Thousands, through its consumption, are daily rendered rich, and thousands poor. A paper, which should give the true statistics and history of its consumption, would not be the least remarkable page in the history of the world.

The number of acid drinks in use in Russia is very great; it is remarkable that much as the Russians love sweets, no kitchen deals so largely in acids as theirs. Perhaps their constitutions require those violent contrasts; perhaps, as extremes meet, the quantity of oil and thick fat substances they eat, awaken the appetite for both the sweet and the sour.

Of all fruits, the produce of the highest north, the "mamurami" affords the pleasantest beverage; it is of the size and form of a mulberry, with the flavour of a pineapple; mixed with champagne and wine it makes the finest punch in the world—a drink worthy of a poet's song.

Unfavourable as the climate of Russia seems to be to such enjoyments, there is no country where dining in the open air is so customary. A large quantity of food is constantly carried about the streets of the cities by peripatetic restaurateurs: in winter, hot tea and soups, potatoes, and hot cakes; in summer, ices, cool sherbets, kwas, &c. &c. The number of places for the sale of ready-dressed food in Russian towns is immense; often a large hall or open booth, or some other spacious locality, is prepared as a dining-place for the lower classes, where the artist and the observer may find as rich a harvest for the pencil and the pen, as the workman may of pirogas, kwas, and shtshee. The great number of unmarried persons who live at St. Petersburg and other cities, without being *at home* there, render such establishments necessary.

In the consumption of meat St. Petersburg surpasses any other city in Europe, and, if we exclude the badly-fed army of 60,000 men from our reckoning, may perhaps be esteemed the best-fed city in the world. It consumes nearly 4,000,000 poods of corn yearly: that is, children, old people, and sick included, 200 pounds a-head; 100,000 oxen; viz., a whole ox to every  $4\frac{1}{2}$  men, without reckoning cows and calves. Of swine and sheep rather less are consumed than in Paris; but the destruction of fish is enormous. Of herrings, for example, in 1832, 53,000 tons were brought to St. Petersburg: that is, one ton to every eight persons. According to the statement of the minister of the interior, in the same year, 500,000 poods of salt, or 36 pounds a-head (about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  oz. a-day), was the consumption of St. Petersburg. It would be interesting to compare this statement with similar ones relative to London, Paris, and Vienna. Data enough are given in the journals of Russia, though it must be confessed that such grossly absurd contradictions appear in the statements, on the most superficial examination, that no one can attempt to reconcile the inconsistencies, or to calculate an average.

The environs of St. Petersburg are more steril and unproductive than those of any capital in Europe, Madrid excepted; on which account it has been aptly enough called the New Palmyra—a magnificent and luxurious city in the midst of a desert. The merest trifles only are supplied by the neighbourhood. The daily bread ripens on the shores of the Volga, and has many a river and canal to pass before it reaches the ovens of St. Petersburg. Even the hay is brought from a great distance. Eggs, and such like articles of immediate consumption, come from the thickly-peopled environs of Moscow; hence trade in such articles is conducted on a much larger scale than elsewhere. Baskets full of eggs are brought into our towns, but whole caravans of them are brought to St. Petersburg.

The fruit-gardens of St. Petersburg are in Stettin or the Crimea; their apples come from a distance of two hundred miles over a stormy sea, or of three hundred over the icy steppes. Their meat is fattened on the

shores of the Black Sea, for only a tenth part of the consumption stated above is supplied from any other district. The salt is partly Calmuck, partly Swedish and Norwegian. The butter comes from Esthonia and Finland; and so on with the most ordinary articles. Those of luxury here, as every where else, are, of course, the product of foreign lands.

A St. Petersburg meal is served on so large a scale, that a native of that city must think himself in a land of famine in Hamburg, Vienna, or on the much-praised Rhine. The prologue to a dinner consists of so many appetizing dainties, that one may easily mistake it for the dinner itself; as an innocent peasant might mistake the richly-decorated drop-scene for the play. A Russian grand dinner is like a piece of music, of which long after the chords have announced the approaching end, a multitude of thrills and cadences flourish as it were into a new part, till at last it comes to a close in a profusion of fruits and sweetmeats, and the performers separate. At a real Russian banquet the dessert is as distinct from the dinner as the preliminary whet, and is taken in another room. Liqueurs are taken before dinner to excite the appetite, and after dinner to assist digestion.

For the rest, it is with the St. Petersburg dinners as with many other things in St. Petersburg, little real enjoyment, with a profusion of the means of enjoyment. The whole affair is carried on much too quickly. The dishes, which are cut up at the sideboard by the carver, and earned round, succeed each other with great rapidity. With every dish the suitable wine is offered by the servants in ready-filled glasses, till a perfect forest of them is gathered round each plate; but the epicure in wines misses the bottle from which he might help himself at pleasure to what he liked best. All these customs are *gênant*; still more so that which fetters the guest to his place during the whole banquet. It is considered an unheard-of violation of propriety to rise from one's seat, even in the smallest family circle. The guests sit down *in pleno* at a sign from the host, and rise after the last dish also *in pleno*; and no one may venture, as in England, to linger in jest or conversation over the bottle. When a toast is given, at which no speech or even sportive remark is ever made, every one rises silently, bows, touches his neighbour's glass with his own, and quickly reseats himself. To go up to any one in particular, to touch glasses, would be deemed the silliest proceeding in the world. A man eats at a Russian dinner as if he were tethered to a manger.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### FOREIGN TEACHERS.

EVERY spring, when the ice melts in the Gulf of Cronstadt, and the market behind the Exchange is opened with its gaily-coloured wares of macaws and paroquets, and its abundance of rarities and delicacies, alive and dead, from the same ships that have brought out the new fashions and new books from London, Paris, and Lubeck, many young ladies may be



seen landing with torn veils and ruffled head-gear. These are the lovely and unlovely Swiss, German, French, and English women destined to officiate in Russia as priestesses of Minerva, in fanning the flame of mental cultivation. Exhausted by sea-sickness, saddened by home-sickness, frightened by the bearded Russians who greet their eyes in Cronstadt, and pierced through and through by the chill breath of a St. Petersburg May, they issue from their cabins, pale, timid, and slow, anxiety and white fear upon their lips, and despair in their eyes.

The manner in which Russia greets her newly-arrived guests is not the most friendly; and if it be true that a first impression of men or of countries is the most decisive and important, merciful Heaven! what evil prognostics must not this reception call forth? No stranger ever landed in Russia whose first thought as he disembarked was not of his return. Not a guest would the country retain, it is my opinion, if, as soon as he stepped on shore, he could find an opportunity to go back again.

Unwillingly the fair strangers leave the ship, the last piece of their native land that has followed them to this strange region, and hurry to hide themselves and their sorrows in the first hotel on Vassili Ostroff, till their friends, or the family to which they are recommended, come to seek and bring them forth to the light of day.

Their entrance into a rich and distinguished house is a new stage of suffering; and if the rude voices, long beards, and filthy clothing of the barbarous population of the harbour terrified them, here the glitter of unwonted luxury alarms their bashfulness. The loud tumultuous life of a great house in Russia, where no one comprehends their feelings in the slightest degree, is enough to overwhelm them; and, quartered in an apartment with the tribe of children intrusted to their care, they have scarcely a corner to themselves where they can weep out their grief. Once caught in the whirlpool of St. Petersburg society, they feel themselves at every turn wounded and repulsed, and they feel that they in their turn repulse and offend. However their mothers and sisters may have exerted themselves to arrange their wardrobe, they quickly find it unsuited to the northern capital. They must learn to "sing another tune." Even Parisian manners will not do in St. Petersburg; their French pronunciation is criticised and found fault with, for the St. Petersburgers speak their own French, and modify the French manners after their own fashion. Even a French courtier would be found wanting here a hundred times, with his freedom of demeanour and easy habits: much more so a quiet Swiss governess just descended from her mountains, or a German tutor who has made a pilgrimage hither from some unknown nook of his father-land, to aid some Russian statesman or court lady in the education of a family of children.

However, with time comes experience. The modest finery of the distant home is laid aside as a keepsake; the quickly-filled purse is resorted to—the outward form is modified after the fashions of St. Petersburg; the sentimentality of western Europe is laid aside (for, compared to the Russians, not only the Germans, but even the French and English are sentimental); and the strangers learn to assume, by day at least, a decorous mask of cheerfulness, and thus contrive in the end to put a good face on the matter, even should the pillow be tear-moistened at night.

The position of domestic tutors and governesses in Russia is peculiar, and much more important than with us. We have many, it is true, of

both in Germany, France, and England, but it cannot be said they are greatly considered; they are moderately paid, and remain generally within certain limits, or find refuge in the holy state of matrimony or the church.

In Russia it is quite different; private teaching is there a profitable employment, and as such an object of all kinds of speculation; for the condition of private tutor is not only a very good stepping-stool to all sorts of honourable posts, but a solid employment for life, furnishing not only an abundant maintenance for the present, but offering the prospect of a future free from care. It is, indeed, a game of chance, like every thing else in Russia; but one in which, with many blanks, there are an extraordinary number of prizes. "Consider now, my dear boy, what you would like to be," said a father in St. Petersburg to his son, whom he had sent for from Germany where he had finished his studies; "whether you feel most inclination for the Finance or the Department of the Interior, whether you would like to be Director of the Post or of the Bank, or whether you would prefer the Mastership of the Woods and Forests or of the Mines, or whether you would like to enter the military service." To a tutor in a Russian nobleman's family all these careers are open; you have only to find the right entrance.

A young man who is tolerably pleasing in manner and appearance, or at all *comme il faut*, as it is called, with his solid German acquirements, is tolerably certain to find this entrance; that is, if he can stand the fiery ordeal to which his position as domestic tutor subjects him. There are many young men who from tutors have become state and privy counsellors; many also who, from mere sorrow and hunger (of the mind) have lost not only all joy in life, but sometimes life itself.

It is much the same with the governess. If she be tolerably pretty and agreeable, and possess some of those *talents de société* which the Russians value so highly, she can scarcely fail to entangle the heart of some young adjutant or colonel, as whose lady she will give soirées and balls in her turn—but a cherished wife, a loving mother to loving children—?

And even if such should not be her lot, if she can accommodate herself to the humour of her patroness she may lead a very supportable, brilliant life. She will find opportunities of making her light shine before men, and of gratifying her vanity; and what is more, she may look with tolerable certainty to an ultimate retreat to her native land, with a little fortune to solace the evening of her days. The cities of Montbeillard, Lausanne, Neufchatel, and some others, the nurseries for governesses for all Europe, are full of small capitalists of both sexes, who have accumulated their little fortunes in Russia. To maintain themselves successfully in such a position, however, they require a total want of susceptibility, whether false or real, for the Russians are pitiless towards such feelings. In their stead let there be a certain coldness and strength of character, and a resolute and watchful defence; for the Russian always strikes his flag to perseverance and firmness.

Some contrive to accommodate themselves so thoroughly to the Russian element as to exchange their own national peculiarities for those of Russia, and prefer remaining for life where they have spent the better part of it. In many Russian families are to be found such after-growths of superannuated English nurses, Frenchwomen, and Germans, who have adhered

to the family till they are considered regular parts of it, and enjoy all the privileges of adoption accordingly.

In St. Petersburg, which keeps all articles of the first quality for itself, and despatches the inferior ones into the provinces, much is of course required, and the capabilities of the tutors and tutoresses employed there, must be much on a par with those of other capitals; but in the provinces it is wonderful what a cry of astonishment is often raised at very moderate endowments.

"He is a miracle of a Nyemetz (German) that I have got for my children," assured me once a thorough Russian gentleman in one of the provinces; "he speaks German, English, French, Greek, Latin, and knows all sorts of sciences that ever were. It is wonderful to hear how he plays on the pianoforte, and sings. Ah, Heaven, I am perfectly amazed at the man!" On a nearer acquaintance, I found this "wonder" a very ordinary person indeed, who had indeed a smattering of many things, but seemed to me hardly *master* of his native language.

The tutor in a Russian provincial house, is always an oracle, and the governess a prophetess. If at table or elsewhere, any thing occurs relative to any science whatever, all eyes turn to the oracle, before whose omniscience all are dumb. To doubt him would compromise the doubter; all listen attentively. "Ah, you must know! That is all in your way!" How often an honest German is almost compelled to make a solemn face, and play the part of conjurer thus forced on him against his will! "I do not know," "that is not in my way," "I imagine so and so." Such a way of speaking would ruin a man's credit for ever in the interior of Russia. "What does he say?" "He don't know." "Why does he not know? We do not know, either. Then he knows no more than we do! God knows what he does know! he is one of those learned quacks that are so plentiful with us."—"You must know, sir; you must be sure; say yes or no. What lies between yes or no? Uncertainty, ignorance. If you don't know, sir, why do you call yourself a learned man? Solomon says, that all knowledge is vanity, but two thousand years have passed away since then. Almost every thing is known now, and you, as a German and an examined teacher, ought to know every thing. The D—! else why do we pay the Nyemtzi so much money?"

Learned modesty does nowhere less for a man than in Russia, where the depths of science are not even guessed at, and where they stop short on the surface, and strike on the few fragments loosened from the mountain of knowledge. The learned are expected to deal in ordonnances like the government, which speak out positively; *sic volo, sic jubeo*. A man must carry his learned small change in his pocket, that it may be at hand when wanted, and deliver himself, thus: "It is known to all the world that the thing is so, and so;" or "the famous so and so says,"—"You say so, but I say no! I know better, keep to what you understand and be silent!—twice three are five, and one are six, Abrakadabra! Aristotle was the disciple of Plato, and Plato of Socrates, and all three are positive on this point, &c. &c." "*Vot Maladez!* (see, that is the right lad) *he* understands! what a learned man! It is really astonishing!" And with the wonder at the learning the matter rests; they have

\* *Maladez*, signifies "a clever young man." *Vot Maladez* is a very frequent exclamation of admiration, when any thing is done particularly well.



moreover a certain awe of learned people, because they think themselves so often looked down on by them.

It is odd enough that the very thing we are apt to reproach the Russians with, they retort upon us. The Germans have the general reputation with them of being wilful, full of humour, and difficult to *get on with*. They find them so perhaps in comparison with their own very extraordinary capacity for accommodating themselves to the caprices of a superior, while a German who seems to place any value on order, justice, morality, or self-reliance, passes with them for a malcontent and perverse.

Learning and science help the teacher but little in Russia, if they are not sometimes positively injurious to him in his social relations; the appearance of them is the one thing needful. Musical talent, piano-forte playing, and singing, are of great value, and will win him many a heart; but the most valuable qualifications are elegant dancing and address at cards. He who dances well and plays well at cards, is the true man, "*comme il faut*," and he who is *comme il faut*, is the man of all others for the Russians. He who can win 500 rubles at whist in an evening, sing German songs well, and display a graceful new step in the dance, he is their most intimate friend, he is more, he is their lord and master, and may rule their hearts at will. There are a multitude of foreigners in Russia, who, by the exercise of accomplishments like these, have obtained the highest influence in families, which they guide as the Jesuits are said to have done formerly.

This is the easier for them, because the Russians have in serious business, more confidence in foreigners than in their own countrymen, and trust the former willingly with their secrets. To this it may be added, that in all Russian houses, many patriarchal customs prevail; all members of the household come to be looked upon as integral parts of it, and with the little fastidiousness of the Russian in reference to difference of birth, speedily amalgamate with the family. Whoever shows a joyful countenance, takes all things as he finds them, is willing to renounce his individuality, and to make a part of the social dough into which he is baked, like a plum into a cake, may reckon upon an existence outwardly comfortable enough, and his vanity will often enough be agreeably tickled; but he must not take too rigidly into the account, how often his self-love and sense of honour suffer in the process.

It is well known that the Russians pay their teachers highly, three to four thousand rubles yearly is a usual salary; but sometimes as much is given as six or even ten thousand, when they wish to allure an instructor to Siberia, or to any of the more distant provinces. A pension is generally secured at the end of the engagement; or as the fashion now begins to prevail, a round sum of thirty or forty thousand rubles when the education is completed. The salaries have of late rather increased than diminished, on account of the sparing manner in which passports have been granted for Russia.

The majority of the tutors are obtained, or "written for," as the phrase runs, from Germany and France, the governesses mostly from French-Switzerland. Many come from the Baltic provinces, Germanised Esthonians and Livonians of the lower ranks, who turn the German and French they have picked up to good account in the interior of Russia.

In Dorpat I once met a Russian nobleman, who had engaged seven

governesses for himself and his friends, and was setting off with them for the interior, packed in three kaleshes.

The *bonnes*, or nursery-maids, for the younger children in St. Petersburg, must be English, who, by general consent, are pronounced better suited for the office than those of any other nation.

The great educational institutions in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and other places, and the Foundling Hospital, furnish yearly from eight hundred to a thousand young women for the offices of instruction; they are scattered throughout the empire, where, in too many places, their previously over-delicate education renders them very unhappy.

Governesses are to be met with in all societies in St. Petersburg, of which they are often the best leaven. Tutors are seen in every corner with their pupils, and form a considerable element of the population of the city.

The government busies itself so constantly with the matter of private education, that there are already a multitude of laws and regulations concerning "*instituteurs, institutrices, and precepteurs.*" The latest and most remarkable is that of 1834, in which all the privileges of the examined private tutors are detailed. According to this ukase, they are reckoned in the service of the state, and consequently entitled to wear the "*lesser uniform*" of the ministry of public instruction. Private tutors in the old noble families are advanced after two years' service into the fourteenth rank; those in merchants' families of the first guild, of preachers, priests, and the lower class of nobility, have the same rank after three years' service; in those of persons of no positive rank, after five years; and in those classes not entitled to enter the service of the state, the tutors are not entitled to this fourteenth grade till after eight years' service. They may then, like all other officials, expect in process of time to become titular counsellors, court counsellors, &c. &c. There are already counsellors of state in Russia, who have never been any thing else but private teachers. "*Instituteurs*" are the *educators*, properly speaking, and take precedence of "*precepteurs,*" who merely give lessons. After fifteen years irreproachable service, the *instituteurs* in noble families receive the cross of the order of St. Anne of the third class; the *precepteurs*, the cross of the order of St. Stanislaus of the fourth class; the tutors in non-noble houses can only obtain the St. Vladimir's cross of the fourth class after twenty to five-and-twenty or thirty years' service. Whoever in five-and-twenty years has prepared three pupils for the University receives the title of *Instituteur Emérite*. On the receipt of each of these signs of honour they must pay 100 rubles to the fund for the maintenance of impoverished and sick private tutors.

These regulations from the abovenamed ukase are selected as interesting and characteristic. There are similar laws for actors, fencing-masters, drawing-masters, teachers of music, &c. &c. For all these persons cuttings and snippings have been saved from the decorations and ribbons of generals and marshals; and thereby have little miniature marks of honour been manufactured, the value of which it requires a moral microscope to discover. Is not this rather to throw ridicule than confer distinction on a class of persons whose business is so highly important in itself?

The German view of Russian education is, that the outward varnish is all that is required or understood; that the fructifying spirit is entirely wanting; that the utmost that is given is external polish and lifeless

knowledge. Just as this opinion is on the whole, it would yet be highly unjust to rest satisfied with it, and turn away from the subject without the acknowledgment of much praiseworthy endeavour.

Since Peter the Great first launched her on the ocean of European civilization, Russia has been seized with an enthusiasm, or rather with a frenzy for improvement, such as no people in the history of the world ever experienced before. Academies, universities, national schools, gymnasia, started forth as at the stroke of a conjurer's wand within the wide limits of the giant empire. Multitudes of French and Germans have wandered over the land for the last century, scattering the seed of western cultivation. The rulers of the land have recognised the schooling of the people as an important branch of government; and as for the army, the finances, and commerce, so there is an especial department of the ministry for schools, scholars, and teachers. The emperor and empress spend a great part of their time in the inspection and improvement of the public institutions. In imitation of this example, the chief authorities in the provinces are as much occupied with the control and inspection of the schools as with any other branch of public business. It would be unreasonable, then, not to bestow some interest and attention on so much well-meant labour, even if we cannot approve of the manner and direction of it.

The portion of the earth over which the influence of the Russian government extends, and which it is sought to Russianize in every possible way, reaches from the frontiers of Germany, deep into Mongolia, to China and Japan; the children who now feel the rod of the Russian schoolmaster, are already counted in millions; the discipline to which they are subjected, must, therefore, be an object of interest to the statesman. Our historians have been accustomed to assume, as admitted truths, that what has long endured must be good, what has slowly advanced will be slow in the retreat; but on the other hand, a rapid rise forebodes as rapid a descent, and, thereupon, we Germans turn our backs upon Russian cultivation as a hot-house plant, which, forced into unnatural maturity, will as quickly fade. These historical axioms, however, will not avail us in judging of Russia. So remarkable and peculiar a people have never before appeared in the page of history; and those who know the interior of the country will admit with admiration, the long perspective of hope and futurity that is revealed in the spirit of the people, and acknowledge that the astounding resources and masses set in motion, promise a greater future than *we* dare flatter ourselves with. The Russians, of all European nations, place most value on exterior show, and seem to place the least value on inward worth. The Russians swim like dolphins on the surface, and shun the deep waters. They stand, in this point of view, as in many others, alone in Europe; and all other nations, even the French, Italians, and Spaniards, form a striking contrast to the Russians, who touch only the surface of justice, truth, or science, but work most elaborately at the details of the outward casing. This makes itself felt in their tribunals, where the whole hierarchy of presidents, upper judges, lower judges, secretaries, &c., are in the best order, but where no justice is to be had; in their army, where rank and the uniform are most rigidly exact, and the manœuvres executed with brilliant precision, while tactics and military science, all that forms the very heart's core of an army, is wanting. It is the same thing in their commercial arrangements; the outward appearance of their wares is extremely elegant, they



are displayed in the most brilliant manner, but the goods themselves are worthless; it is the same in their schools and educational institutions, where the building, the order, the examinations are all excellent, but where the pupil, even if he have collected some knowledge, has yet reaped no real harvest, acquired no animating impulses, nor has ever drank at the true fount of the muses. The exterior arrangements of all the schools, public and private, not only in the two capitals, but even in many of the provincial cities, are extremely handsome. The rooms are spacious and well laid out, the food of the young people, taken on an average, much better than with us in similar institutions; and as the government has an eye every where, it is impossible that such infamous dens should exist, as appear to have their being in England, if a hundredth part of the statement in "Nicholas Nickleby" is to be believed.

In the public schools there is a fixed uniform for all the masters and pupils, one for week-day, and another for Sundays, and a state uniform for high festivals. No lesson is allowed to be given except in uniform; and the continual reproofs and chastisements on account of those uniforms take up as much and more time than the correction of real faults. Those very paltry matters not only waste the time, but exhaust the powers of the teacher for more essential objects. The same spirit reigns in the private as in the public schools. There is a constant anxiety about outward appearance, an unceasing criticising and reproving for trifling faults of dress, walk, speech, demeanour, &c. &c.

This glaring contrast between the splendour of the apparatus, and the poverty of the result, has naturally excited a feeling of contempt among thinking persons, who, however, as before observed, would do better to examine carefully what has been done by the thousands of Russian schools, and not to be too severe on what those schools have omitted to do.

Mathematics form a main object of instruction in all Russian schools, and are pursued with some success; geography also, particularly that of their own giant land, is cultivated with extraordinary and praiseworthy diligence. The history of Russia is carefully taught in detail; and there is no doubt that the pupils in a Russian school, taken on the whole, could give a better account of Russia, both historically and geographically, than the pupils of a German school could of their much divided country. The weakest points are natural philosophy and classical literature. The neglect of the latter may be pardonable enough, but in a country whose natural productions are yet so little inquired into, and which offers such abundant materials for increasing the resources of the state, it is quite inconceivable why more attention is not paid to the hidden powers of Nature. The state of Medical science may be considered as forming some exception to so general a censure.

The university of St. Petersburg is too much like our own in its principal features, and yields too little fruit to deserve particular mention. One of the most important and most peculiar institutions is the so-called "Pedagogical Institute," the object of which is to form teachers of all kinds, teachers for the national schools, for the gymnasiums, and even professors for the universities. It was established in 1832, after the Polish revolution. The reformation or abolition of the Polish schools, the object of which was to deprive the catholic clergy and monks of the education of youth, caused a great want of Russian teachers to be felt. To supply this want, the institution was founded, and endowed with nearly all the privileges of a

university. It is under the direction of a learned German, who, with the assistance of his many able co-adjutors, will doubtless accomplish as much as can be done by the means at his controul. The Pedagogical Institution is maintained by the crown at an expense of not less than 250,000 rubles yearly.

The most distinguished pupils who are intended for professors, are dismissed with the name and rank of titular counsellor; books to the amount of four hundred rubles, a complete wardrobe, the third part of their future salary as a present from the institution, and a considerable present for travelling expenses from the emperor. There are about 160 young men there at present; about as many have been already sent out, the greater part to Poland.

They have all sorts of inventions for facilitating the acquirement of languages, historical dates, names, &c. Among others, one was handed to us, as quite miraculous in its operation, when we visited the institution. It is the invention of a Russian, to impress historical numbers more firmly on the memory. The great school board, and the smaller ones of the pupils, were covered with a chronological net, arranged for the two thousand years after the birth of Christ. This net-work of lines crossing each other at right angles, had twenty great divisions, each of which was destined for a century, and one hundred smaller subdivisions or net stitches, ten of a row, and ten under them. Each of these interstices signified a year of the century. The teacher made in different interstices a cross, and then caused the pupil to repeat the event of the indicated year, or he related the historical occurrence, and the pupil made the corresponding cross. It was affirmed that the use of this net and the practice connected with it, enabled the pupil "*de s'orienter*" more quickly in the various regions of universal history, than the ordinary chronological tables. There was a particular net for Russian history, and the pupils showed in our presence, that they had all the celebrated *names* at their fingers' ends.

Languages are taught in a very practical manner, four or five at a time, and for the most part without a grammar. For this purpose they have caused polyglot editions of many classical authors to be prepared, and the pupils were required in our presence to translate out of Greek into Latin, out of Latin into German, French, or Russian, which they did very readily. All the instruction is given through the medium of foreign languages; in one lesson the questions are put in Latin, in another in German, and so on, and answered in the same tongue.

Geography is taught with the chalk or pencil in the hand. The pupils must directly make an outline of the map on the school board and their own slates. One is desired to give the coast of Europe from the thirtieth to the fortieth degree of latitude, another from the fortieth to the fiftieth, and so on. The rivers and mountains, in the same way, are not only to be named, but drawn. The outlines thus given were wonderfully exact. They also named the latitudes and longitudes of the chief cities of Europe; which, *nota bene*, we, the German examiners, as we gave the names at random, could not always do. Our geographical teachers might with advantage adopt some of the Russian methods.

To exercise the pupils in the art of teaching, a system of mutual instruction is practised, as in the Lancastrian schools, but of course under the direction of the masters. The ablest in each class are made to act

both as teachers and monitors. It is strange that this method is not more in use in German schools," and that the old proverb, "*Docendo, discimus*," has been so long a dead-letter with us.

The method of teaching drawing in this institution pleased us extremely; the pupil is not merely exercised in a slavish imitation of the copy laid before him, but in designing, and in the execution of given subjects. One of the pupils drew on his board for us a very pretty sketch of a Cossack shooting down a Turk, a subject which seems in a very lively manner to interest the fancy of the Russian child, as well as of the Russian diplomatist.

Another school peculiar to St. Petersburg, is the "Technical School," founded about seven years ago by the finance minister Count Kankrin. Its object is to furnish teachers of the mechanical trades to Russia. Two hundred and forty pupils are taken, who receive the necessary mathematical and other instruction, and are at the same time exercised in the construction of machines, and in other departments of mechanics. The buildings are very extensive, and every art has its own division. On one building is inscribed in golden letters, "weaving;" on another, "dyeing," "mill-building," "lock-making," and so on. The masters employed are all Germans. The institution is also made use of to furnish models of all newly-invented machines, which are afterwards sent as patterns into the interior. One of the German directors who showed us the place, was well content with the docility of the Russians. "But there is one mischievous word," said he, "which will for ever hinder them from reaching perfection in any thing, and that is 'nitshevo' (it is no matter), the use of which no Russian can be persuaded to leave off."

If a problem is to be solved, the Russian is always ready with his "Nitshevo," which acts as a constant impediment to any progress of a solid and enduring kind, which demands time and labour. On the other hand, it must be confessed, the Russian's "nitshevo" helps him through a thousand difficulties.

The schools for the female sex are scarcely less numerous in St. Petersburg than those for boys. The most important is the great Institution of Smolna in the cloister before named. The greater part of the 800 young maidens brought up there are nobles. Those of plebeian birth are in a separate building, have another dress, other attendance, and another table. This institution, and similar ones in other cities, are for the daughters of impoverished nobility, what the corps of cadets is for their sons. If they do not know what to do with the sons, they put them into the cadet corps; if they cannot educate their daughters at home, they send them to one of these institutions.

All wealthy Russians prefer a private education for their daughters. The directresses of all these institutions, and particularly of that in St. Petersburg, are very often women of rank, the widows of general officers, &c., for whom a provision is thus made. The greater part are well-educated and high-born Livonian ladies of German descent. These ladies are held in no small consideration; and those who with us would be simple teachers, have here almost the rank and dignity of governors of provinces.

The yearly cost of the Institute of Smolna is 700,000 rubles, or nearly 1000 for each young lady, for which one might expect something brilliant. It is undeniable that all that is capable of outward polish receives it in no



small degree; but the light is a borrowed light without warmth, a light possessing, no doubt, a certain outward charm, but destitute of that fruitful and life-giving power, which is the more to be desired, because the greater part of these young ladies are destined to be governesses, to carry the seeds of mental cultivation into the bosom of their country.

The Smolna Institute is perhaps the only one of its kind in the world; no where else perhaps is there collected under one roof so much noble blood in such fresh youthful veins. There might be a book written from the interesting stories to be gathered from the annals of this establishment. Unfortunately, the fair creatures appear but rarely in public. Their way of living resembles that of the cloister. Now and then, indeed, on high festival-days, a long train of carriages and six are seen to defile before the gates to indulge the fair chamber-flowers with a mouthful of fresh air.

Besides these public imperial institutions, there are, of course, in St. Petersburg, as elsewhere, a multitude of private schools in which business is carried on in a right manufacturing spirit. It is a common thing for a mother to place her daughters in one of these, on condition that their education is to be finished in two or three years; that is, they must speak French, and play a symphony of Spontini. The more quickly the school-mistress undertakes to despatch the business, the greater pecuniary advantages are afforded her.

The examinations in such establishments are the most showy spectacles that can be imagined. For a fortnight before, the house is cleaned and trimmed and adorned; and for two months before, the practising and learning by heart goes on unweariedly, that all may go off smoothly on the great day. The mothers, sisters, and aunts go in state in their coaches and four. The scientific part of the examination is followed by a concert, at which the pupils perform; and then a ballet, in which they display their skill in the dance. After all this, the division of the prizes takes place amid the uproar of trumpets and kettle-drums; and the whole concludes with a supper and a ball, whereupon the parents drive home again, enraptured with the intellectual improvement of their children.

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE BUTTER-WEEK.

THE festival of Easter, a great one with all Christian communities, is particularly distinguished in the Russian Greek church; so much so, indeed, both in reference to the time it lasts, as the pomp of its celebration, that all other holidays sink to nothing before it. Even as spring commonly sends many fine days as forerunners to announce its approach, so the Easter festival, "the festival," as a Russian calls it, is preceded by a whole series of smaller festivities, and succeeded again by a kind of epilogue; and these holidays, taken all together, stretch over no inconsider-

able portion of the year—over nearly two months. If we reflect that a Russian spends a sixth part of his life in keeping Easter, and that all the joys, sorrows, privations, business, work, and play of the whole Russian people, during so considerable a portion of time, are determined by the festive occasion, it must be worth while to take a nearer view of a festival of so important a character, and so wide an influence.

The Easter festival itself begins in the middle of the night of the Saturday in Passion-week, and its joys are loud and incessant through the eight following days. This centre of festivity is preceded by a seven weeks' fast as a preparation for the feast, and before the seven weeks' fast comes an eight days' feast as a preparation for the fast. All these spring merry-makings may be thus divided into three consecutive celebrations.

Firstly, Eight days drinking and carousing, called by the Russians *Masslänitza* (Butter-week).

Secondly, Seven weeks' fast, called, to distinguish it from the other fasts, "*Velikoi posd*" (the great fast).

And, thirdly, Easter itself, and its attendant train.

In the great world of St. Petersburg, the approach of the great fast is announced by the balls and other carneval revels coming fast and furious, even as early as the beginning of February. For the mass of the people, the sports and pastimes with which they take leave of roast meat and other pleasures are all pressed into one week, the "*butter-week*," as it is called, which falls generally in the middle, or towards the end of February.

The butter-week contains the quintessence of all Russian festivity, and, except the Easter-week, there is no week in the whole year which offers to a St. Petersburger such an abundance of earthly enjoyment as this. Firstly, as its name implies, the week is one of butter; butter is eaten instead of oil, which must be substituted during the fast-days. The *Masslänitza* may be literally said to be redolent of butter. The favourite dish of this season is composed of *blinni*, a kind of pancake baked in butter, served up with a sauce of melted butter, and eaten with caviare. The *blinni* belong peculiarly to the butter-week and are baked at no other time of the year, but at this season they are served up punctually at every breakfast. In St. Petersburg they are to be had in perfection at the Russian coffee-house kept by Mr.—,—unfortunately, I have forgotten the name of this excellent person, but the taste of his *blinni* is fresh in my recollection.

After a butter-week breakfast of *blinni*, nothing is more agreeable than a walk to the "*Katsheli*," or swings, the usual amusement enjoyed between breakfast and dinner during the butter-week. It is the only one in which all classes of society partake in common, from the head of all, the enthroned summit of their Babylonian tower, down to the lowest and dirtiest of its base.

The Russians delight as much in all motion where the limbs are at rest, and the body changes place by means of a machine, as they eschew all corporeal exercise, which keeps the muscles in play. Hence their pleasure in the Russian mountains, as they are called; in swings, sledge-driving, see-sawing on elastic planks, whirling through the air on roundabouts, &c. These are amusements in which a Russian's delight is part of his very nature, and they are enjoyed alike by prince and peasant. The fibres of the muscular system of the Russian are sluggish and unelastic; gymnastic exercises are nowhere more neglected. Their blood is volupatious, their nervous system excitable; hence this swinging and

gliding, this flying and floating without any effort on their own part, is peculiarly to their taste.

Their inventions of this kind are innumerable; but the chief and crown of all Russian pleasures for the people is that expressed by the favourite word *Katsheli* (swing), which includes all similar pastimes.\*

For the erection of the *Katsheli* of the butter-week they choose a large and particularly long piece of ground, which is never wanting in the extensive Russian towns. In St. Petersburg the icy floor of the Neva was formerly in use; but since the accident of some years ago, when the ice gave way under the pressure, and swallowed up a multitude of the swingers, the Admiralty square has been the chosen spot.

Long trains of sledges, laden with beams and planks, are seen moving for days before in that direction, and soon, under the strokes of the ready Russian hatchet, theatres and other wooden buildings, which recal the palaces of St. Petersburg 140 years ago, are reared amidst the splendid edifices of the Admiralty, the War-office, the Senate and Synod Houses, &c. These booths are erected in long rows: among them are theatres capable of holding some thousands; and these ephemeral buildings, aping the magnificence of stone buildings, are decorated with galleries, pillars, balconies, &c. At one of these theatres I saw several hundreds busily at work, and swarming like so many ants; with their hammers, saws, and hatchets, they afforded no uninteresting spectacle in themselves, even before the stage had been prepared for the show.

To foreigners, the most striking of these preparations are the ice mountains and the method of their construction. A narrow scaffold is raised to the height of thirty or more feet, on the top of which is a gallery, ascended on one side by wooden steps; on the other is the great descent, very steep at first, and gradually declining till it becomes level with the ground. It is formed of huge square blocks of ice laid upon planks. Under a few strokes of the hatchet the beautiful solid crystal masses assume a regular form, and over the whole water is thrown from time to time, which cements or rather ices the blocks together. Where it is level with the ground dams of snow are formed on either side, and the gully between filled with water, which, freezing smooth as glass, lengthens the slide. Two such ice mountains stand always opposite one another, so that their paths, only separated by the snow dams, run parallel to each other.

The English say that they invented these ice mountains. They have probably improved the mechanical part, but the amusement itself is an ancient and a national one, and is practised over all Russia. In the court-yards of most of the great houses in St. Petersburg there are such ice mountains erected for the amusement of the children; and even in the halls of some of the wealthier Russians, elegant "*rutschbergs*" are to be found, with this difference, that the slide is made not of ice but of polished mahogany, or of some other smooth wood, down which the little sledges glide with great rapidity. There is a mahogany "*rutschberg*" even in the imperial palace. In every town and village these slippery declivities are

\* When a Russian family removes into the country for the summer, the first thing done for the amusement of the company is to repair the old swings and to erect new ones. Scarcely has spring set in than the peasants throng to the birch-woods, and bending down the elastic branches of the trees, form them into swings, where the young people of both sexes pass their leisure, singing and swinging. In some neighbourhoods there are public swings, where old and young lounge and swing for hours.



crowded with youths and maidens rushing down with the swiftness of arrows. The sledges are made of ice, dexterously shaped into ships. In the hollow they lay straw to sit upon, and in front a hole is bored for a rope. In the climate of Russia these sledges are lasting enough. I saw one morning in St. Petersburg a striking instance of how much these ice mountains form a national amusement. I was by chance very early in a distant quarter of the city, and observed mounted on the roof of a small building a number of people, servants, women and children, whose slippers and floating hair betrayed that they had not long left their beds. They seemed busy about something, and I concluded there must be a chimney on fire, or something of that kind. No such thing; they had formed a snow mountain from the roof to the ground, and in a few minutes down went the whole company, shouting for joy, on a straw mat, which did duty *pro tempore* for a sledge.

When all the booths, mountains, and swings in the Admiralty Square are firmly fixed (that is, for the temperature of St. Petersburg, the greater part of the pillars having no other foundation than a hole in the earth filled with snow and water, which holds them as firm as a rock, unless the St. Petersburg February belies its nature), the fun begins on the first Sunday of the "butter-week," and then the gliding and sliding, swinging and singing, whirling and twirling, tea-drinking and nut-cracking, that make up the "Masslänitza," go merrily on for the eight stated days.

Tea and nuts are the staple comestibles at a Russian Katsiteli. The tea-sellers stand with their tables at the doors of the theatres and booths, arranged in the same way as they are found at the corners of the streets in the towns. In the middle stands a huge machine, from whose chimney a column of steam curls upwards from morning till night. Round about are a multitude of teapots of all sizes, in which you may have double, single, or half portions of tea. In general only a glass of tea is asked for. Behind his table, stamping and slapping his hands, stands the seller, bawling unceasingly "Gentlemen, will you not please to take a glass of warm tea?" Off goes his hat to every one who looks at him; and as he has little doubt that tea is wanted, he often begins to fill the glass at once, inquiring only, "Is it your pleasure with cream?" The Russian in general drinks it with a slice of lemon instead. Or, "How will you take the sugar?" for the real Russian custom is to bite off a piece of sugar before taking his tea; only those who affect foreign manners put the lump in at once. Yet more numerous than the tea-sellers are the dealers in nuts. Their tables, standing under tents and inclined towards the street, are divided into compartments filled with all kinds of nuts—Oräkhi (hazel-nuts), Val-lotski and Gratsheski oräkhi (Italian and Greek nuts), Ukrainski oräkhi (Ukraine nuts), and Funduki, the largest kind of hazel nuts, equal in size to a pigeon's egg.

However many these merchants may be, they seem all busily employed, and seldom lay aside their scales, or the shovels out of which they offer samples of their wares. In a few days the snowy floor of the Admiralty Square is regularly paved with nut-shells, and looks as if a whole army of nut-crackers had encamped there.

Nuts, sweatmeats, and honey-cakes are the only eatables to be had. Eating-houses, wine and brandy shops, are not allowed on the elegant square of the Admiralty, as they might give rise to indecorous scenes. A honey-cake may be eaten with grace, and so may a *bonbon* presented by a

lover to his mistress: even a nut may be tolerated if nibbled at squirrel fashion, and not demolished by an uncivil crash and a grimace. Cakes and tea may be nipped and sipped in public, but hunger and thirst let every animal satisfy in his own lair.

It struck me as odd enough that the Russian street merchants offer every thing to every body.\* Either very elegant people must buy very inelegant wares, or the sellers must be so persuaded of their excellence, or so bewitched by the vision of a few possible copeks, that they do not perceive how little chance they have of finding customers in such a class.

It has always appeared singular to me that there are so few Bajozzos and Policinellos at a Russian Katsheli, as no people are readier in satire and persiflage, or in imitating the oddities and peculiarities of others. The slightest anecdote related by a Russian of the lower class, is always accompanied by the liveliest mimicry, and on a thousand occasions he shows himself as a ready speaker and actor. Nevertheless it is a fact that all the harlequins and jesters who travel about the Russian fairs are foreigners—chiefly Germans and Italians. The greater part of these worthies are stupid enough, like many a journalist, whose profession makes it daily incumbent on him to show his wit. The crowd follow, however, laughing aloud wherever the music from the balcony of a theatre announces that such a one is about to exhibit. Perhaps the very peculiar Russian spoken by these Neapolitans and Hamburgers may make them comic in their own despite, for it is certain that the natives seem excessively diverted by them.

Among the Petersburg Bajozzos, however, there was one who had a great fund of humour, but he was a native Russian.

#### THE GULANIE.

In the front of the booths and theatres swarming with the tea-drinking, nut-cracking pedestrians, there is always a broad space reserved for the equipages of the grandees, who make their appearance about noon, to see the fair. A universal driving in carriages takes place regularly in the "butter-week" at the Katsheli, the Easter-week, and on the first of May, throughout Russia. On their estates, the wealthy Russians and their guests enjoy these "Gulanies" in the evening; every thing that can be called horse or vehicle is put in requisition; droshkies, kaleshes, chaises, landaus, hunting and provision carts, are mounted by the whole domestic population, and away they go coaching it through the country.

The enormous number of equipages in a Russian city, where, from a tailor of any eminence upwards, every body keeps one, renders these Gulanies very amusing. The luxury in this respect is greater in fact in some

\* A thousand times I have been offered "grāshneviki," a disgusting kind of fast-cake, baked in stinking oil, and other delicacies of that sort, with "Ugodno 'ss?" ("Will you please to buy the very best cakes?") And often I have felt inclined to answer "Booby! don't you see I am a gentleman, and do not devour such filth?" but when I looked at the smiling face, courteously lifted hat, and heard the ready jest, I could only reply "Thank you my merry friend, keep them for yourself."

provincial cities than in the two capitals, as in the former there is no prohibition of four or six horses for certain ranks, and every one is at liberty to make his team as long as he likes, or as he can.

The splendid horses of a Russian equipage do not, however, show to so much advantage in the slow parade step to which they are confined by the throng of carriages on such occasions as the *Katsheli*, as they do when going at their usual speed. The horses are not so round in form as our *Holstein* and *Mecklenburg* breed, nor have they the superb manes and tails of the *Andalusian* race, nor did they seem to me to step well together. The enormously long traces, too, necessarily drag on the ground in a walk. They are like the ostrich, which makes no very pleasing figure when walking, but which running at full speed with outspread pinion seems borne on the wings of the wind.

The merchants are known by their brightly furbished *kaleshes*, drawn by two black horses, with their manes plaited into a multitude of little tails. The foreign ambassadors generally adopt the Russian style in the number and caparison of their horses. The carriages go so slowly, that their contents may be contemplated at leisure; fair young maidens, with their pretty French governesses; countesses and princesses, enveloped in their sables and silver fox furs, reclining at their ease and surveying the crowd through their eye-glasses; boys in the national costume with their tutors; here a corpulent merchant with his long beard, and his equally jolly spouse; there a bishop or metropolitan, meditating on the vanities of the world; then a foreign ambassador, then a nuncio from the pope, reflecting on the increasing power of the northern heresy. Further on, twenty court-*kaleshes*, each with six horses, and filled with young girls—these are the damsels from the *Smolnoi* Convent. English merchants, German artists, French doctors, Swedish professors, Turks, Persians, Tartars, even Chinese, and last of all an emperor and his whole court.

A numerous corps of gendarmes are busily employed in keeping order among the equipages, which increase in number so greatly at last, that while one end of the line is turning on Peter's place, round the rock of Peter the Great, the other is turning round the base of Alexander's column, a good English mile apart. Sometimes a carriage will attempt to get out of the line, to the grievous discomposure of the breathless gendarmes, who, however, behave very well in general, and without respect to persons. I saw once a warm debate arise between one and a first minister of state, who wanted to break the line. The coach-and-four got the better at last of the soldier, who was alone, and forced its way through. The poor defeated gendarme shook his head angrily when he saw there was no help, and called after the minister, "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, my lord! this is the second time to day that you have disturbed the order. Shame upon you, my lord."

On the whole, the lower class content themselves with the very harmless amusements at the *Katsheli*, except that here and there a few indulge perhaps too freely in their potations. "Forgive me, it is butter-week," is then pretty generally admitted as an excuse. "Ah sir, don't look so long at the picture, it is the last day of butter-week," pleaded an old soldier, who opened the door for me at *Brulow's* picture. He seemed pretty well charged at the time, I thought, but he assured me that he must have a glass or two more to enable him to encounter a seven weeks'



fast. One must do the St. Petersburg police the justice to say that the streets are rarely disturbed by any scenes of brutal intemperance. The very quiet nature of Russian intoxication may perhaps partly account for this. A Russian coachman is often as full as a bottle in a bin, and yet shows no sign of any deficiency, till he fairly tumbles off his box.

## THE BURNING THEATRE.

Amusing as it is to occupy a convenient place at this spectacle of the Katsheli, where the Admiralty-place is the stage, buildings like the Winter Palace, the Senate House, and the War-office, serve as side scenes, and where the whole population of St. Petersburg appear as actors, still it is difficult to forget that the festive scene has witnessed two most tragical occurrences; the one was the giving way of the ice on the Neva when so many found a watery grave in the midst of their thoughtless merriment; the other, and more recent, was the burning of the wooden theatre. I must confess, few narratives have excited in me more horror than those connected with the fire just alluded to. Thousands may die on the battle field; we honour them, but their death fills us not with dread, they win a glorious name, and they die with honour. Thousands meet their end upon the sick bed; we weep for them, but it is the course of nature that they should die. But that thousands by mere accident, in the midst of sports, in the most thoughtless revelry, should bid adieu to this fair world, to all their plans and hopes, stifled in a miserable wooden booth like so many rats and mice—this is fearful, and reminds us too awfully of the feeble tenure by which we hold existence.

The wooden theatres at the Katsheli are some of them very large. One in particular generally surpasses all the others in this respect, and is capable of holding 5000 persons. In this it was that the fire took place when the scene was to represent some firework or illumination. At first those behind the scenes, hoping to extinguish the flames, said nothing about it; as they increased, the audience applauded loudly, supposing it to be the promised spectacle. Suddenly the Bajozzo rushed forwards, with a look of horror, shouting aloud, "We are on fire, save yourselves, you who can!" The audience answered by loud laughter, at the admirably feigned fear as they supposed it to be. Thereupon, as it was impossible for him to make himself heard, the director ordered the curtain to be raised, and a mass of flame and smoke became visible. Screams of horror burst from the thousands of throats whence loud laughter had issued just before. Each grasped convulsively those dearest to them, and rushed to the doors. These were but few, the size of the place considered, and a fearful length of time elapsed before the foremost gave way to those behind. The flames in the mean time gained rapidly upon the pine planks around them, leaping from slip to slip, and already showing their fiery tongues among the dense mass of spectators. Most unfortunately it happened that one of the large folding-doors opened inwards. By the pressure of the throng it was flung to, and could not be moved one way or the other. On the outside the attempts to rescue the poor victims were at first feeble, for who in the midst of gaiety dreams of such a fearful chastisement? Those within, in the mean time, compressed the anguish of years into a few minutes as they

stood breast to breast shrieking in vain their frantic "Forwards!" to those in advance. The whole mass were stifling, the flames leaping threateningly over their heads, yet they were only separated by a few thin boards from the free bright air, and in a few minutes more they might have rent asunder their fragile tomb with their hands and teeth. Fancy sickens at the contemplation of the suffering of those minutes; only one risen from the ashes could truly paint occurrences that rent asunder the chords of life when suddenly awakened from the slumber of thoughtless enjoyment to the wildest pitch of terror and despair.

The police would not at first allow of any individual effort for the rescue of the sufferers; a merchant who had seized a spade succeeded, however, in defiance of them, in dashing through a plank, and bringing nearly sixty half-suffocated creatures from this harlequin's hell. The worthy man was afterwards rewarded for his act of courage and humanity by an order, and, as he was poor, by a pension of 2000 rubles.

The terrible news soon spread through the town that Lepmann's theatre was on fire, and thousands struggling with the most horrible of deaths. The anguish became universal. The consternation of the city, the scenes of agony and transport that followed must have been seen to be understood. The emperor, who had left the Winter Palace opposite at the first news of the fire, was met by shrieking and despairing women calling on him to save their husbands, sons, and brothers; he could only answer, "My children, I will save all I can."

When the fire was got under, and life and flame within were extinguished together, the dreadful task began of digging out the bodies. The sight was beyond all conception terrible when the fallen beams were removed, disclosing the heaps of charred and stifled bodies, which were dragged out with hooks, like loaves out of an oven. Some were burnt to a cinder; others only roasted; of many the hair of their heads was only singed, while on others it was burnt off; their eyes were destroyed, their faces black and calcined, yet some still were decked with the gaily-coloured handkerchiefs and holiday clothes, which the thickness of the pressure had saved from injury! These were far more terrible to look on than those entirely burnt. In one part of the building that remained standing a crowd of dead were discovered in an erect posture, like an army of shadows from the lower world. One woman was found with her head leaning over the front of the gallery, her face hidden in her handkerchief. A gentleman who saw the bodies brought out told me that he was unable to touch food for three days after, and a lady who had glanced at the terrible spectacle from a distance was quite out of her senses for some days.

The number of those who perished was officially announced at 300, but I was told by one person that he himself had counted fifty waggons, each laden with from ten to fifteen corpses; and some people, who had every means of obtaining correct information, made an estimate, whose amount I am unwilling to repeat, lest it should be thought improbable.

Some were brought to life again; many died afterwards in the hospitals from the injuries received. One little boy was found sitting quite unhurt under a bench, where he had crept when the falling fragments began to shower down fire and flame upon the heads of the doomed multitude. The beams and dead bodies had so fallen over him as to form a protecting roof

against the flame and smoke, and there the child remained till he was dragged out.

On the following day public prayers were offered up for the souls of the sufferers on the place that had witnessed the scene of their last agony.

### THE GREAT MASKED BALL.

The upper classes take part, as we have seen, in the common amusements of the Katsheli, but it is only for a few hours at noon; they resort then to other diversions, and revel after their own fashion. To speak first of the theatres. Many as there are in St. Petersburg, they are all in full play during the butter-week; while it lasts, there is no rest for the poor actors. Towards the close of the week they play twice a day, morning and evening, French, German, Russian, and Italian. In the great theatre (Bolshoi Theater) the great masked ball takes place in the butter-week, and this may also be reckoned among the popular diversions, since every well-dressed person is at liberty to go, whatever be his rank, the emperor himself holding it his duty to appear there.

I was present at the ball in the year 1837. The entertainment was to begin at eleven, and the play lasted till half-past nine. I was curious to see how the Russians, with their acknowledged quickness of execution, would change the theatre into a ball-room in so short a time. As soon as the last spectator had left (I was the only person who remained, leaning against a pillar of the imperial box), the great chandelier was raised, and darkness fell over the wide space. By degrees some hundred workmen appeared with lights, and, while one party began to clear out the pit and orchestra, another directly followed with beams and planks over the stage, and began with saws and axes to raise a din through which only now and then an order and directing voice could be heard. This wide dark space, this rasping and hammering, this carpentering, calling, bawling, and commanding, seemed like another chaos under me, whence some great birth was to proceed. As fast as the platform from the stage to the pit advanced, the carpenters were followed by a crowd of chattering women with brooms, sweeping aside the shavings and dust. On the stage a cloud seemed to descend from the air. It was a bale of silk and woollen stuffs, which was received beneath by creative hands. These, partly draping and partly sewing, quickly transformed the stage into a beautiful Turkish tent, open in front. A gallery for the musicians was no less quickly reared at the back of the tent, and at the sides benches for the spectators. In the front, as if by magic, the platform proceeded meanwhile to completion; and stairs were made to ascend to the boxes on either side of the imperial grand box, which, by taking away the doors, seats, and balustrades, were changed into passages. The clock struck ten, a quarter past, half-past, and at every quarter the workmen had evidently accomplished a part of their task; at a quarter to eleven the last sounds of the hammer and saw were heard. The floor was made, the supports firm, the cloud of dust cleared away, the ceiling opened, and the magnificent chandelier descended over the young creation of the decorated ball-room. At the same time, round the balustrades twinkled forth the thousand stars of wax-lights; a lackey passed over the floor, scattering perfumes from a large vessel, as if he, the first man, were offering incense to the new sun of this



young world; which was peopled as rapidly as it was created. At eleven the people came streaming in, and not only men and women, but animals too, frogs, birds, &c., and none of the customary characters of a masquerade were wanting. At half-past eleven the emperor entered, and the first music thundered forth. It was a chorus, accompanied by the whole orchestra. It is usual to open balls which have any claim to nationality with such a chorus, accompanied by the orchestra. The usual piece is the Russian national hymn, "For the Emperor and sacred Russia." As soon as the emperor appeared, all my thoughts of chaos and a new creation vanished; I had no longer eye or sense for any thing else than this representative of a power that has not its like on earth. Wherever the emperor placed himself, he seemed to regulate the movements of all around him, as a strong magnet does the iron. Every where a respectful circle of staring spectators formed round him, but were kept within their own orbit by some invisible power. Wherever he could, his imperial majesty mingled with his subjects, and went diligently up stairs and down stairs. The young ladies in dominoes flocked curiously about him, and those he took goodnaturedly on his arm and walked about with them, exciting them to jest with him. Many ladies who cannot in any other way approach him attend this ball, merely for the sake of hanging for once upon the emperor's arm. He never was at a loss for an answer, but replied very graciously to all that was said to him. As I passed him once I heard the mask upon his arm say, "Ah! comme tu es beau!" "Oh, oui," answered the emperor, "but if you had seen what I was formerly!" Another mask said to him, "Il y a peu de dames aujourd'hui." "Oui, mais quant à moi, je suis content, je te prends pour cent." One fair lady, however, seemed to weary him with her obtrusiveness, and as he caught sight of one of his nobles he fastened he rupon his arm, saying "Voilà, T —, une jolie petite dame pour toi." The nobleman walked about with her for a while, and then took an opportunity of civilly getting rid of her. I was glad, for the poor belle's sake, that she was so closely masked.

Besides the emperor and many Russian nobles, there were several German princes present, and accident brought about, in the course of the evening, some curious conjunctions. For example, the heir of a German kingdom joined in the same group with the presumptive heir to a grocer's shop on the Prospekt; the emperor of all the Russias with a French governess; the finance minister of an empire of sixty millions of inhabitants with a merchant's clerk disguised as a frog. And again, in the same corner might be seen a throng of ambassadors and generals, natives of the ever-green isles of Albion, of southern Scythia, and of the summits of the Caucasus; well-dressed mechanics, and Turkish merchants. It is only the common people, however, in Russia who play their parts well in masks. I have often seen Russian peasants or servants *improvise* a masquerade with great humour, but the great do not get through the thing so well. The greater part of the latter were in ordinary black coats, and even dominoes were rare among them. It is not considered genteel to assume a character. Those who wished to enter into the spirit of the thing seemed to feel constrained among the rational unmasked gentry, and the unmasked seemed to look down with much scorn on the harlequin jackets of the others. The emperor comes to please the public, and the ministers, generals, &c. come on the emperor's account; but otherwise the great world do not honour the place with their presence. Only in the boxes

some of the first families appear for a short time, to have something new to say at the private balls to which they are going at a later hour.

When a Russian noble wishes to give *éclat* to his fête, his first step is to secure the presence of the emperor and empress as his guests. Every noble is at liberty to invite the emperor, who makes much less difficulty of visiting his subjects than would be exacted by the etiquette of most other courts. The fête-giver puts on his dress of ceremony and drives to court, where he signifies to the grand-master of the ceremonies that he wishes to give a ball, if it be the pleasure of the emperor and empress to honour it by their presence; and at the same time presents the list of the company invited, which is generally returned unaltered. Now and then a name is struck out, or the desire intimated that no foreigners be present, the emperor desiring for that night to be alone with his subjects.

A chief article of luxury on such an occasion is the display of a numerous retinue. At one given by Count B—, a hundred servants in livery were stationed on the stairs alone. The servants of the house of course are not enough, and ten rubles an evening are paid on such occasions for a good-looking figure for the part. The liveries of course must be all new for the occasion; and at the count's fête fifty wore violet-coloured velvet trimmed with silver, and fifty purple velvet with gold, the colours of the lord and lady of the house. On every stair stood alternately an orange or lemon tree, and a velvet-clad domestic, from the house-door to that of the saloon. The present empress is a great lover of flowers, consequently every ball in St. Petersburg presents a profusion of them. One room is generally arranged as a winter-garden, and rose-bushes and arbours of roses of every shade form inviting nooks for refreshment.

Abundant as the diversions are during the Russian carnival, they double and triple during the last days of the butter-week. Fast and furious waxes the revelry during the three or four days preceding the great fast. The schools break up, the public offices are closed, the great theatres give representations morning and evening, and the twelve bajazzos on the Katsheli announce some novelty every five minutes; the rich give *déjeûners dansants*, which last till five or six in the evening, take a few hours rest, and then make a new and brilliant toilette for a second ball at night. Amongst the common people, in the meantime, the drunkenness of the evening concludes the intoxication of the morning; the public, wherever it is to be seen, seems in the best possible humour, and applauds every thing and every body. The emperor and all his court drive about in their brilliant equipages; down rush the sledges from the ice mountains till the ice glows again; the swings are at full flight, the bells of the wooden houses in the roundabouts tingle without ceasing; the bajazzos announce from hour to hour how long the *Masslänitza* has to last: nimbly rolls his lesson off the tongue of him who shows the lions and the boa-constrictor, that he may despatch one set of customers and get as many more as possible. All the pulses of life beat *prestissimo*—all seem eager to drain the last drop in the cup of joy, until the hour of midnight strikes and proclaims the beginning of the fast. Every dancing couple is brought to a sudden halt, and every one departs homeward to sweeten the tediousness of the fast with the remembrance of the enchanting joys in which the last days of the carnival were brought to a close.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE GREAT FAST.

WHEN one enjoys roast meat, meat soups, milk, and eggs, every day and all days as we other Christians do, we are only half aware how much savouriness and strength the animal kingdom lends to our food. Nothing but a Russian fast can properly teach one how excessively flat and insipid vegetables are without a mixture of animal food, and what a very secondary part they play in our kitchens. The severity of the Russian fast banishes not only flesh and fowl, but milk, eggs, butter, and even sugar on account of the small mixture of animal substance used in the refining. Animal food is the basis of our whole kitchen, and vegetables appear with grace and propriety only as the companions of meat, as the wife appears to advantage only in the company of the husband. Soups made of kwas and mushrooms, fish, and cakes flavoured with oil, tea and coffee with almond-milk, mushrooms again with cucumbers in vinegar, those are the dainties that succeed the fat blinnis, rich pasties, cakes and rôtis of the butter-week. Neither is wine or any spirituous liquor permitted, whereby a cook might give some spirit to his mushroomed, fishy, oily, fasting sauces, or the tea drinker to his watery beverage. The people of the lower class exclude even fish in the first and last weeks of the fast, as they do on the Wednesdays and Fridays in the remaining five. These two days, which must always take precedence of the others, are distinguished in the last week by total abstinence. The very strictly pious extend this additional severity of observance to the whole seven weeks, with a three days' total abstinence in the week before Easter. Even the upper classes observe the fasts much more strictly than they do in catholic countries. The first and last weeks, with the Wednesdays and Fridays of the remainder, are generally religiously observed. The greatest number of infractions of the fast bear reference to the brandy-bottle, the very point in which abstinence would be most beneficial; some maintain that the Russians drink as much of it during the fasts as at any other time. It is not, however, called brandy, but it is enjoyed under the disguise of all manner of euphemisms.

It is remarkable enough how carefully a Russian watches that nothing of an animal substance pass his lips when he has really made up his mind to fast in earnest. A young girl will throw away a whole cup of tea directly, if she smell that her French governess has put cream into it instead of almond-milk. Occasionally mothers take it on themselves to give their little ones a dispensation on the ground of indisposition. "You can't think how this disgusting fast does try one," said a youth to his tutor. "Last Easter I took the sacrament, and for fourteen days together we had nothing but oil, flour, and fish, and had to go three times a day to church. And then the everlasting standing, crossing, and kneeling, you have no notion how it affected me! But at Easter, there was the supper at my uncle's; I was not lazy there!"

After a fast-day breakfast, a walk on the Admiralty-place, to which



people instinctively resort, is a most dismal affair. It is all scattered over with ruins of temporary houses and booths, the ground paved with nutshells and orange-peel. The wooden horses of the roundabout stand idle, the gaily decorated ships and swings lie shattered and heaped together like wood for burning, the smooth mirrors of the ice mountains are broken up with iron bars, and the poor merry-andrew, the Bajazzo, what has become of him? he that for days together seemed inexhaustible in fun and jest? It is melancholy to see how rational he looks as he pants and perspires under the burden of planks, the sad remains of his fool's palace. The thousand voices that stunned us but the day before are silent, or only employed in reckoning their gains or settling with their merchants. All are stretching, yawning, and shuddering at the joylessness of the long seven weeks before them.

The greater part of the public amusements, especially balls and plays, are strictly prohibited. Assemblies and *soirées*, without dancing or masking, take place of the tumultuous ball, and as cow's milk is changed into almond milk, butter into oil, and flesh into fish, so plays become public declamations and improvisations, operas change into concerts; and the theatre, which must not act plays, is open for *tableaux vivants*. The seven fasting weeks to the gay world are one long night, in which only the modest stars and moon faintly gleam, till all at once, like Apollo with his steeds of light, the bright sun of Easter breaks forth in full splendour. In the butter-week the dresses of the *belles* at a St. Petersburg party are glittering with a profusion of jewels; for the fasts, the brilliant diamond is too glaring; the single row of pearls in the hair, here and there the modest turquoise peeping forth like a violet or forget-me-not, and coral ornaments for the arms and throat, are alone seen at the reunions, where conversation and song have displaced the waltz and polonaise.\*

The fasting weeks are the golden harvests of the musical artists; every evening some new singer or violinist is announced with recommendations from Vienna or Paris, and sometimes one will undertake alone to amuse the St. Petersburg public, which would before have tasked the art of a hundred high priests of Thalia. The best of the fast-time amusements are the *tableaux vivants*, which are given with great taste and magnificence, and I cannot understand why these representations should be confined to this one season.

The monotony of the fasts is now and then broken by the feast of some saint, which may fall in this time. Happy the saint thus celebrated; he may reckon upon numerous adorers; and happy the child whose birthday occurs at this time. He may be sure it will be kept till his eightieth year with great joy and festivity; first by his parents, then by his brothers and sisters, by blood and marriage, and afterwards by his children and grandchildren. Family festivals are deemed innocent things, quite suitable to the seriousness of a fast, and therefore people try to make them as splendid as possible.

\* In no country are so many diamonds and other precious stones displayed as in Russia. Not only every Russian lady of rank has her jewel casket, in which, besides those ready set, she has a quantity of loose diamonds and pearls, to be arranged according to fancy at different times and places, but even the little girls have their caskets, containing dozens of rings, earrings, bracelets, &c., with which they are constantly decorated. How necessary they esteem them I learnt from the example of a newly married couple, whose whole capital was 6000 rubles; of which 3000 were spent for jewels and ornaments, and the other three for beds, tables, and other furniture.

## PALM SUNDAY FAIR.

Palm Sunday is another very agreeable interruption of the great fast. The children's festival, which in Germany occurs at Christmas, is in Russia celebrated on Palm Sunday. The scene of this pretty fair is under the arcades of the great "Gostinnoi Dvor," and in the adjoining streets. Huge bundles of twigs are brought into the city by the peasants, some very small, while others are great branches, almost as big as young trees, to suit the various amounts of piety; for while the severe orthodox father buys a whole tree which he gets blessed in the church, and afterwards suspends under the pictures of his saints, his elegant son contents himself with a delicate little twig, which he cracks like any ordinary whip. To these natural foundations are appended the palms which art has constructed to aid the poverty of a northern April. The bare twig is furnished with an abundance of leaves and flowers, some copied from nature, and some the production of a lively fancy. Some are made like the branches of fruit-trees, and hung with all the fruits of the east imitated in wax, with waxen birds and waxen angels fastened to the boughs with sky-blue ribbons.

A great number of natural flowers are also brought from the numerous hot-houses of St. Petersburg, centifolia, moss-roses, violets, hyacinths, and orange flowers, for the elder sisters, who are not content to leave the fair with none but artificial flowers. As flowers alone would not be acceptable to children, sweetmeats and playthings are also to be had in abundance. The Russians have a peculiar talent for making figures and toys out of the most worthless materials in the world; straw, shavings, ice, dough, they turn all to account. One old discharged soldier had made a model of a full-rigged frigate; all sails were set, and it was so large, that as he walked about with it on his head, it seemed as if the vessel were sailing away with him towed at the cable. Another seemed to prefer the more peaceful reminiscences of his childhood to those of the service, and had formed a complete Russian farmhouse with all its appurtenances out of wood and straw. In the farm-yard a man was at work upon a sledge, perhaps his old father; an old woman was at the door with her pails, preparing to go to the spring, and among the cows in the cowhouse sat a young girl, evidently his mother and sister. Another very favourite model is that of a church, with all the cupolas, turrets, crosses and chains peculiar to the exterior of a Russian church. Churches occupy a large space in a Russian imagination; and where we, with a pencil or piece of chalk in our hands, in an idle moment, would write initials, or draw a caricature, a Russian would be almost sure to draw a church. All Jerusalem is sometimes to be seen surrounded by its palm groves, and the multitude entering the city with palm-branches in their hands. The servants of a family make quantities of such things for the children; and what the dextrous fingers of the lackey form out of paper, the cook fashions of sugar. The rich uncles and godfathers send the children palm-branches at this feast that are sometimes worth some hundreds of dollars. On such branches the angels are perhaps gold, the leaves silver, and the hollow waxen fruits filled with costly trifles.

The stalls for the sale, or rather the exchange, of saints' pictures, images, &c. &c., for the Russian must not *sell* the picture of a saint, though he

may exchange it, which he does sometimes for money, are also provided with a multitude of amulets, crosses, &c., of all possible sizes, forms, and materials; and if a person is not inclined to load himself with a heavier cross, he at least takes one of gingerbread, which he has the advantage of being able to eat when he is tired of carrying it.

The dealers in plaster-of-Paris figures throng here in greater numbers than in their Italian father-land. I saw one morning an odd rencontre between two servants, one with a basket full of paper shavings, out of which peeped the figure of Göthe, after Rauch, with his hands behind his back; while the other had bought for his master a plaster Napoleon,—a very fashionable figure, by the by, among Russian officers, from the Caucasus to Siberia. The latter held his Napoleon in his arms, and, as the lowest Russians are always full of compliments, he was making a profusion of bows, which Napoleon was forced to make with him. It looked exactly as if the ex-emperor were complimenting Göthe, who listened gravely to him buried up to his chin in cuttings of paper.

As this is a regular national festival, the emperor holds it his duty to honour it with his presence, and brings all his sons and daughters with him. On a bright clear day, such as even a St. Petersburg April sometimes affords, it must be confessed that a walk here among all these significant and insignificant people affords one of the most amusing spectacles of the season; it is, as it were, the morn of the night of the great fast.

On *Verbnoi Subbota* (Palm Saturday) a great procession takes place, in imitation of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, and all stream into the churches, carrying branches and singing. The priests sprinkle branch and branch-bearers with holy water, and add a blessing into the bargain; the greater number then carry away their palms. Whole groups are to be met with carrying them about till late in the evening, father, mother, and children, with the servants walking behind them; even the infant in the nurse's arms has a palm-twigg, sprinkled and blessed, thrust into its tiny fist. As for the boys, the best use they can make of their twigs is to flog each other with them, which they do handsomely. Some of the more pious leave their branches till Sunday in the church, and many suspend them over their beds, ascribing all sorts of healing influences to the leafless twigs. The children also cherish theirs carefully, but for another purpose. It is the custom throughout Russia to punish those who sleep too late on Palm Sunday to attend early mass, by flogging them with the palm-branches. Girls and boys are all so eager to administer this discipline, that they lie awake half the night thinking of it; and as soon as the day breaks, they are running about in bands in search of the sleepers, whom they punish while singing this verse:—

"Verba biot!  
Biot da floss;  
Ya ne bin;  
Verba biot!"

(The rod strikes—strikes to weeping—I strike thee not—the rod strikes.)

This custom prevails throughout Russia, and the imperial children exercise the privilege as eagerly as those of lower rank.



## THE EASTER EGGS.

The Easter eggs play a very important part at this time of the year. St. Petersburg, lying in a plain little peopled either by man or barn-door fowls, must procure her eggs from a great distance. Moscow in particular supplies large quantities. On a very moderate calculation, there cannot be less than ten millions used at Easter in this capital; for, as it is always customary at Easter, on greeting an acquaintance, to press an egg into his hand, many an individual may consume his hundreds.

Nothing is more amusing than to visit the markets and stalls where the painted eggs are sold. Some are painted in a variety of patterns; some have verses inscribed on them, but the more usual inscription is the general Easter greeting "*Christohs vosskress*" (Christ is risen), or "*Eat and think of me,*" &c. The wealthier do not, of course, content themselves with veritable eggs, dyed with Brazil wood, but profit by the custom, to show their taste and gallantry. Scarcely any material is to be named that is not made into Easter eggs. At the imperial glass-cutting manufactory we saw two halls filled with workmen employed on nothing else but in cutting flowers and figures on eggs of crystal. Part of them were for the emperor and empress to give away as presents to the courtiers. As the latter receive many of these things, they, of course, give them away again to their friends and favourites, who, the next Easter, bestow them in their turn elsewhere; so that these eggs often travel to amazing distances. I happened to know the history of one which came from the imperial palace, passed through numberless hands of high and low, till its last possessor, having let it fall on a stone, pitched the fragments into the Black Sea.

The wax-fruit makers and confectioners produce some pretty pieces of workmanship, in elegant boxes filled with eggs of all sizes in regular order, from the mighty ostrich-egg down to the nightingale's, and all in wax and sugar. Some are *bonbonnières*, and very costly presents are also offered in egg-shells; some are transparent, and in place of the yolk, contain little fairy *bouquets*, and some have a magnifying-glass neatly fitted in, and display houses and trees formed in wax, pictures of saints, and tiny angels couched on roses. A considerable trade is carried on in such commodities at Easter from St. Petersburg, which returns in imitative sugar, the raw produce of the hen-house received from the provinces.

## THE THREE LAST DAYS OF PASSION-WEEK.

On Holy Thursday the occurrences of the day are read out of the four Evangelists after mass. The priest stands in the middle of the church at a desk, on which burn three candles. The churches are in general thronged, and as every member of the congregation holds a taper in the hand, they make an uncommonly cheerful appearance. The poor take a pride in having these tapers as thick as they can get them, and may often be seen with beautifully gilded tapers which have cost them a couple of rubles each. They are burnt throughout the Thursday evening, extinguished on Good Friday, and kindled again at midnight on Easter-eve.

The streets of the towns and villages that are in general unlighted, are then gay with wandering illuminations as the taper-bearers go from one church to another; and that the tapers may not be extinguished, which is looked upon as an ill omen, they are carried in paper lanterns.

On Good Friday there is no further ceremonial than the erection of a kind of tabernacle in the churches; in general, a mere box laid upon tressels and covered with a cloth; on the upper side of the cloth, the body of the Redeemer is represented in painting, embroidery, or half-relief. This tabernacle stands there till Easter-eve, with only so many lights as are necessary to show the objects. The doors of the churches stand constantly open, and the people go in and out to kiss the simulated wounds. The lower class of people go through all the forms of prostration, crossing, and kissing with great fervour and devotion, and we must suppose the most scandalous hypocrisy if we believe this to be all mere acting. Many I am certain are keenly impressed with the sorrows that the Saviour bore for them, and feel the deepest grief for the death endured. No priest can have taught them thus to sadden their countenances, or to give such a devout earnestness to their demeanour, or to draw such deep sighs from their overladen bosoms.

Touching as this appearance of piety is among the poor, there is something exceedingly *naïve*, and even comic, in the devout exercises of the upper, or rather the secondary class of ladies, for the highest have too much tact and knowledge of the world to expose themselves to ridicule. But the wives of provincial nobles, and those of the richer merchants, drive about the whole Saturday from one church to another to pay their visits of devotion with the same self-complacency as they do those of ceremony at the palace twenty-four hours later. "*Attendez, ma chère,*" one of them will say to her *dame de compagnie*, who keeps at some distance, and has her own thoughts of the matter in her French head, as she watches her patroness approach the tabernacle, and with great decorum and politeness, and the assistance of her footman, perform the due number of genuflections and kissings. In this way the *devotee* makes her round of the churches, till, getting wearied after a time, she exclaims "*Skutsho*" (It is very tiresome), and drives home again to superintend the preparations for the grand midnight or morning feast that is to be celebrated in her house. For now, heaven be praised, the oil and fish feeding is over, and the savoury steams Torn every kitchen announce the coming joys of Easter-day.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### EASTER-EVE.

IN the last days of the fast expectation is strained to the highest pitch. On the Saturday before Easter-day the thermometer of religious inspiration falls below zero. The lights, the singing, the bells, all the pomp

of divine service is consigned to repose. The devout are thoroughly exhausted with abundant kneeling and listening to the long readings.\* Many have had nothing whatever to eat for the three last days, and are really half-starved. The churches are as dark as the grave; no priest shows himself on the Saturday evening till midnight.

It is customary for one of the congregation to take on himself the office of reading from the gospel. A desk, on which lies an open Bible, is placed in the middle of the church; one of the lower classes, who can just spell out Slavonian, will advance, light his taper, and read till some one else advances to release him. Except the beautiful church singing, no custom of the Russian church seemed to me so really touching and edifying as this public reading.

As I was making the tour of the churches on Easter-eve in 1837, I found in the church Spass Preobrayenskoi, a scarred veteran soldier, standing at the desk reading with his taper in his hand. Around stood a number of children with folded hands, listening as attentively as the elders. In another it was a long-bearded, venerable, old man, who, in a trembling voice and feeble tone, but with great earnestness and devotion, read aloud the history of the sufferings of the Redeemer, to a crowd of old people, youths, and children of both sexes, whose attention was never once diverted by the constant flux and reflux of the worshippers of the sacred tabernacle. I found a like spectacle in every church I visited, and was never tired of contemplating the edifying and heart-moving spectacle. It is a pity that the clergy do not oftener let the scriptures out of their hands, and allow the congregation to take part in the administration of the sacred office. Religion would certainly be the gainer. All priests, without exception, contract, by daily repetition of the same things, a certain workmanlike dexterity and indifference in the execution of their duty, that deprives it of all influence on the heart. On the other hand, the emotion and sympathy of the unprofessional reader is visible and unfeigned, and the doctrine and teaching coming directly from the heart, appeal directly to it. Even when the reader is not a good or fluent one, the effect is not injurious, but rather the contrary. When he hesitates, approaches his taper nearer, the listeners seem yet more attentive, and when the right word comes, it makes the more certain impression. They seem to say to themselves "Yes; so it is. That is the right word: the truth!"

It is strange that the reformers of our church did not make use of so mighty a lever to piety as this congregational assistance might be, but left the people during divine service, in a state of inactivity that must tend to impair devotion. If, not always perhaps, but on certain occasions, one of the congregation were at liberty to ascend the pulpit, the whole—Some influence of family devotion would be imparted to public devotion, and a feeling of brotherhood would be infused into the congregation.

Towards midnight the throng increases. In St. Petersburg the court appears in the imperial chapel in full dress; and in the provinces the governor, with all his adjutants and officers in their splendid uniforms, attend

\*There are no seats in any Russian place of worship, either public or private; the whole service is listened to standing or kneeling. In very rare cases an elderly lady of rank will have a chair in her private chapel. Even the emperor stands all the time of the service.



the cathedral. The priests begin a mass which is but languidly performed or listened to, till all at once, at the hour of midnight, the whole scene changes. The golden door of the "Ikonostas" (the middle door of the pictorial wall that separates the Holy of Holies from the rest of the church) flies open, and the song bursts forth, "Christohs vosskress! Christohs vosskress ihs mortvui!" (Christ is risen, Christ is risen from the dead!) At the same moment the illumination of the church is completed, not only the lamps and great chandelier, but the countless tapers in the hands of the congregation, which have been held hitherto unlighted. Whilst the chief body of priests, still singing "Christohs vosskress," remove the pall with the corse, two others in their richest dress pass through the church with censers in their hands repeating the joyful words, and stopping before the shrine of every saint to swing the censer and make their genuflections, and before every group of devotees to bestow their blessing. The congregation shake hands, and kiss all with whom they have the most distant acquaintance. "Christohs vosskress," says the saluting friend, and "Voyst venno vosskress?" (Is he really and truly risen?) answers the saluted. This last sentence appears to be literally that spoken two thousand years ago by the disciples hastening to the empty tomb of Christ, and brings before our eyes in the liveliest manner, the wonder and excitement of the first Christians who handed it down to us. The singing of the priests meanwhile continues. They also embrace each other; the bishop, metropolitan, or whatever priest of the highest rank may be present, now places himself before the Ikonostas, and bestows on every member of the congregation who approaches him his blessing and a kiss, with the words "Christohs vosskress." The churches are illuminated without as well as within, and all the bells in the city ring out at once. In St. Petersburg many of the streets and public buildings are illuminated; rocket after rocket rushes along the sky, and the cannon boom at intervals, amidst all the countless bells and voices echoing each other from all sides of the broad Neva.

Amid all this tumult, a procession, headed by the priests, all bearing tapers and torches, passes round the church, and then the last ceremony, the blessing of the food, takes place about three o'clock in the morning. The rich who have the means of consecration at hand, do not find it necessary to carry their food to church, and moreover they are sometimes quite content with the species of consecration a good cook bestows, but the poor cannot enjoy their Easter breakfast till it has been blessed by the priest;—perhaps they have a foreboding how ill it is likely to sit upon the stomach weakened by long fasting.

The spectacle in the church is most extraordinary. They range all the dishes in long rows through the whole church, leaving space enough between the rows for the priests to pass, till the increasing numbers compel them to form the lines without the church, and even a good way round. The huge oddly-shaped loaves called Kulitshe, the towers of white cheese, into which I know not how many coloured leaves of spice are interwoven, the former decorated with flowers, the latter bearing a burning wax-taper on its summit, the heaps of red coloured eggs, lumps of sugar, pots of honey, plates of preserved fruit, all these painted, illuminated, many-coloured, strange-looking eatables, and collected in such quantities, have so curious an effect, that one can hardly help supposing the important ceremonies are to end at last in child's play; one cannot help looking

into the faces of the reverend goodies and white-bearded fathers, to see whether they are not masked children who will at last throw off their disguise, and in the midst of all their flowers and fruits, end with a dance in honour of Flora and Pomona. It is not necessary to observe them long, however, to be convinced that these good child-like people are quite serious in their proceedings. As the priest advances, sprinkling to the right and left, and pronouncing the blessing, while his attendant keeps up a constant chant, the people press closer and closer, crossing themselves and keeping a sharp watch that their flowers and food get their due share of the purifying waters. "Batiushka" is heard here and there, "sdes moi pashka." (Father dear, my Easter dish has got none.) Breathless with haste others come running up, and as they untie the cloth containing their dishes, supplicate a moment's delay from the priest, who is generally good natured enough to comply.

The Russian Easter banquets are certainly the most peculiar things of the kind that can be seen, both from the time at which they are taken, (the sun often rising on the dessert,) and from the appearance and demeanour of the guests. Whole colleges and corporations come in gala dresses to pay their court; after the unvarying salutations "Christohs vosskress," eat something; and go away again. Thus the professors of a university pay their respects to the curator, the judges, secretaries, and other officers of the law courts, to their president, &c. All is bowing, congratulating, and kissing. The cooks and confectioners give themselves a world of trouble to prepare their dishes with some reference to the time. Lambs made of butter are often paraded in the middle of the table, the fleece admirably imitated in butter also; lambs of sugar, decorated with flags, crosses, &c. Many dishes appear in the form of an egg, which seems to be held almost as sacred. Some years ago, a court lady gave an Easter breakfast to the imperial family, at which every dish at table was served up in eggs. The soups sent up their savoury steam from gigantic ostrich eggs, furnished, as well as the other eggs for holding hot food, by the porcelain manufactory. Here eggs produced chickens full grown and ready roasted, and there a monstrous birth developed a sucking-pig; while pasties, puddings, creams, game, fruits, and jellies blushed through egg-shells of fine glass. Lastly, by way of dessert, eggs of gold paper were offered, containing almonds, raisins, and sweet-meats of all sorts.

To be thoroughly national, two dishes are indispensable at an Easter breakfast, paskha and kulitsh. Paskha is made of curds beaten hard, and served in a pyramidal form; the kulitsh is a thick round cylindrically shaped white loaf, sometimes made with a multitude of little kulitshi sticking upon it, like young oysters on the back of an old one, with plums, consecrated palm-twigs, &c., which latter always project a little from the crust. Both must be decorated with flowers and wax-lights; and if, in addition to these, a hard egg and a dram be swallowed, the common Easter breakfast of a Russian of the lower class has been taken, and you may go to sleep for some hours with a good conscience wherewith to begin the enjoyment of the Easter festivities.

Of these, beyond all dispute the most interesting (where a pair of pretty lips are concerned), is the Easter kiss. I will endeavour to give some idea of the enormous consumption of this saccharine article at this time of year.

In the first place, all members of a family, without exception, kiss each

other: if the family consist only of ten individuals, there are at once ninety kisses. Then all acquaintance meeting for the first time at Easter, even where the acquaintance is but slight, would think it a breach of politeness not to kiss and embrace each other with the greatest cordiality. "The devil take you, Maxim," I once heard an old woman exclaim to a young man, "can't you say 'Christohs vosskress,' and give me a kiss?"

If we suppose now that every person in St. Petersburg has, upon a very moderate average, a hundred acquaintances more or less intimate, that calculation will give for St. Petersburg alone, with its half million inhabitants, a sum total of fifty million Easter embraces. Let us consider only on how large a scale many individuals must carry on the business. In the army every general of a corps of 60,000 men must embrace all the officers, every colonel, those of his regiment, and a select number of soldiers into the bargain. The captain salutes all the soldiers of his company, who are mustered for the purpose. The same in the civil department; the chief embraces all his subordinates, who wait on him in their gala dresses. Considering how numerous are the divisions and subdivisions in a Russian bureau, the chief must have no little occasion for lip-salve on the following day; for, as far as I observed, these official caresses are by no means mere matters of pretence, as they are sometimes on the stage, but real downright smacks, such as might be exchanged by lovers. A subordinate officer has enough to do, who has often a dozen grades above him; but as to the poor dignitaries, they must be fairly out of breath. Herein, of course, as in all other cases, the largest share of business falls to the emperor's lot. Let us consider his numerous family, his enormous retinue, the countless numbers who come to salute him on Easter morning, those of the nobles whom he is more intimate with and may meet by accident; and even then he has not done. On parade the whole body of officers, and some of the privates picked out for the occasion, are honoured with an imperial embrace, which is not refused even to the meanest sentinel of his palace as he passes him on Easter Sunday.

As all these caresses are given and received with the greatest cheerfulness, and amidst smiles and handshakings, as if they saw each other for the first time after a long separation, or after some heavy and long-endured misfortune, it may be easily imagined how many gay and amusing scenes are passing in the streets and houses. "*Christohs vosskress, Yefim Stepanovitsch*" (Christ is risen, Euphem Stephen's son), bawls one bearded fellow to another. "*Voyst venno vosskress?*" (Is he really risen?) Then they seize each other's hand, embrace heartily, and finish with "*Padyóm v'kabak brat*" (Let us go to the public-house, brother); and to the public-house they go, where the brandy runs as freely as the clear water in Mahomet's paradise. It is an exaggeration, however, to assert, as some travellers have done, that, under the shield of "*Christohs vosskress*," any stranger is at liberty to salute any unknown fair one. It is true that even in the higher circles some elderly gentlemen will take advantage of the season, and give occasion for some badinage among the young ladies, though it is never taken amiss. I once saw in a provincial town in Russia the sentinel at the gate, after he had examined the basket or cart of the peasant girls, salute every one in a very grave and business-like manner, and he assured me that he did so throughout the week. The coachman and other male servants kiss the children of their masters without ceremony, but only the hands of the grown-up daughters; the domestics on



these occasions fill their pockets with painted eggs, one of which is presented to every one they salute, or from whom a trifling *douceur* may be expected in return.

That all scenes at Easter are not quite so cheerful or so peaceable may be well imagined, when we consider how freely the *eau de vie* (it might more properly be named *eau de mort*) flows during this period. To be intoxicated at Easter finds excuse every where, and it is carried so far, in Little Russia particularly, that whole villages are often drunk at once. Of course, much scandal is caused thereby. Servants run away, or are sent away, on account of excesses committed at Easter. The German families complain sadly; many are left at this time altogether without domestic assistance, as there is no bridling a Russian at Easter; and yet, with all this universal uproariousness, there is certainly less crime committed than there would be any where else. A Russian Easter in England or Italy would be a regular period of bloodshed; but, owing to the natural good temper and peaceableness of the Russian national character, there is here far more to excite laughter or repulsion than fear or indignation.

In the capital of the Ukraine, I was once passing the gate through which a crowd of persons of both sexes were staggering, and all as drunk as they could well be. As I stood still to look at them, and shook my head, one of the hindmost, in the same condition as the rest, approached me, and taking off his hat, "Drunk, sir—all drunk!" said he; "it is a holiday; forgive them, sir—pray forgive them; pray, sir, don't be angry—forgive us! God *has* given us a holiday." There was no getting rid of him till I gave him my hand, and promised to forgive what I as a foreigner could have no right to punish. Another time I saw, in another city, a drunken man take off his hat to the governor in the public square, fall on his knees, and, seizing the dignitary's hand, exclaim, "Ah, I'm drunk, your excellency; it is a holiday, but I beg you will have me beaten; I have drunk too much, indeed; pray, your excellency, do punish me!" Nor could the governor get rid of his singular petitioner till he had given him a reprimand.

But enough of these grosser matters; turn we rather to the countless throng of brilliant equipages that fill the streets, all driving, hurrying, flying to court, to kissing, to church, and to the Katsheli. Yes, the Katsheli, for in Easter-week it returns again with all its whirling, twirling, swinging, and nut-cracking. The ice-mountains and sledges are no more, but in their stead come oranges and ices!

In fact, to judge from the immense quantity of oranges that are to be seen heaped upon the stalls at Easter, one would think that the garden of the Hesperides lay directly before the gates of St. Petersburg, or that they grew throughout Russia like birch and pine trees. Whence they all come to be sold at so reasonable a rate, I know as little as I do how all the Champagne is procured that is drunk in Russia as freely as if that province had been long a part of the Russian empire. It is a certain fact, however, that in Russia, to the very frontiers of Siberia, all the places where the fairs are held at Easter, seem inundated with oranges and lemons.

The south is provided for by Odessa and Taganrog, but north and central Russia through the northern ports. The golden cargoes are generally landed at Libau or Reval at the latter end of February or in March, and are transported from St. Petersburg as far south as Kharkoff, where the

itinerant dealers proclaim the pyramids of oranges and lemons piled up on their heads, as the genuine produce of St. Petersburg.

Ices are to be had, of course, the whole year through at the foreign confectioners, but they are first sold in the public places and streets at Easter. The custom of selling ices in the streets is unknown in Germany, but is favoured here by the cheapness of ice and preserved fruits. Like butterflies fluttering from the chrysales, a number of young fellows, who a few days before, wrapped in greasy sheepskins, were vending their oily gräshniviki (hot cakes), now flaunt away in red flowered cotton blouses over black velvet trowsers, with long white and red embroidered cloth slung over their breasts and shoulders like the ribbon of an order. The ends serve to wipe their glasses in which they offer their ices; and thus equipped, they may be met with at Easter in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, and indeed throughout Russia. They carry their ices in great cans filled up to the neck with rough ice, and thus hawk about their delicate mouth-cooling merchandise under the hottest sun.

The business which we are employed in, affects, it is well-known, our whole being and character in a high degree, and so it is with these people. The same men whom I saw so taciturn and monotonous over their oil cakes in the fast days, are now all alive in their gay cottons, and full of jest and good-humour, while presenting their pink, snow-white or coffee-coloured ices. One of them, who had his stand by the swings, was my particular friend; near him I often loitered to divert myself with his acting. I took the trouble one morning of writing down some of the eloquence with which he sought to allure his customers.

"Moye potshtenie!" (Your most obedient servant, sir), he called out to a gentleman at a little distance who was not thinking of him and his ice, "What is your pleasure? ready directly; Oh! how hot it is to-day; one wants something to cool one! How! you will take vanilla? What—nothing! I am very, very sorry! Moroshniye, moroshniye! sami svasheye! ice, ice, the freshest, the coolest. Chocolate, vanilla, coffee, rose-ice, all of the very best. Who tastes my exquisite ice—my flower-bloom (so he called one particular ice). My ice is like a poppy, come my loveliest girl, will you taste my poppy ice?" (The girls of Little Russia wear in spring a number of showy poppies in their hair). "Taste it only! It is sweeter than the kiss of your bridegroom. You like it best mixed, perhaps? Good, dearest, mixed it shall be like your cheeks, red and white—will you please to taste?"

And hereupon he hands the ice temptingly mingled in a graceful tapering mass of red and white. The girl looks embarrassed, but ends by taking the wooden spoon he flourishes in his right hand, and eating the offered delicacy. "Zvätui zvetot." "Blooming flower, poppy bloom, vanilla blossom, coffee blossom. Who will take my most delicious ice. See here my good old father, red, red as a rose, and yellow as gold. Ah! you simpleton, give your copper for my gold." (Here he puts a little in a glass and holds it up to the sun). "Ah! how superb! How I should like to eat it myself! But I am not rich enough. I can't afford it. Come, father, buy some of it, and then I can have a taste. There, take it father, and much good may it do you. For your little son as well? Moroshniye! Ugh, how hot it is! I am half-melted. I must have some ice." (At the beginning of the Easter holidays in Russia, this is a tolerably strong poetical exaggeration, as may well be supposed.) He then tastes a little,

turns up his eyes, and raises his shoulders as if it were pure ambrosia. "Ha! good mother, what are you gaping at? Does it make your mouth water. Truly, I cannot bear to see you there melting in the sun before my eyes. There, try it." And he holds out his wooden spoon with a sample. The old woman laughs, must taste, and cannot get off under eight kopeks. And then the tempter begins his strain again, which is scarcely ended when the sun has already ended his course for the day.

During the whole of the Easter-week the churches stand constantly open, and even the golden doors of the sanctuary, which remain closed throughout the year, excepting at certain moments during divine service, now admit the gaze of all. The more pious, generally, hear a long mass every morning before they hasten to their amusements. The holidays are closed by a "final mass," at the end of which "the division of bread" takes place, a ceremony whose meaning I have not been able to find out. I believe it may be only a viaticum or souvenir of Easter, which the priest bestows upon the faithful. Large loaves are baked, the outer crust of which is coloured red, and stamped with the words, "Christohs vosskress ihs mortvui," in gold letters. These loaves are cut into small pieces; the priests fill some baskets with them, carry them to the railing round the altar, and throw down the bits of bread among the people, who stretch out their hands with eagerness. The pieces are anxiously examined to see who has got the letters. Those who obtain the characters forming the first word of the inscription hold it for a particular piece of good fortune; but the holders of the last word "mortvui" (death), on the other hand, are much grieved, and esteem it a very bad omen. This is natural enough. I must confess that I was glad when I caught some of the letters forming the "vosskress," and should have been inconsolable if "mortvui" had fallen to my share. These pieces of bread, like the palm branches, are laid up among other relics on the table or shelf where the image of a saint rests.

With this ceremony, as before said, the Easter holidays, properly speaking, end. Every thing, however, has a conclusion, then an end, and then a real and complete cessation. So there comes halting behind the Russian Easter yet another holiday which may be said finally to close the doors of these festivals. It is the Monday after Easter, called by the Russians "Pominatelnui ponyedelnik" (Recollection Monday). When I heard this name for the first time, I asked a Russian the meaning of it, to which he replied "Because people then remember their parents." This Monday is nearly our All Soul's day, and is no doubt brought in connexion with Easter, partly because it follows so immediately, and partly because the resurrection of Christ has a natural connection with the hoped-for resurrection of those dear to us. To say the truth, Recollection Monday is a kind of monster of a holiday, for in the manner of its celebration religious gravity is so much revolted, and yet the feeling and fancy flattered by so much that is kindly, that we know not well whether we should condemn it for its indecorum, or cherish it for its childlike simplicity.

In the morning the people flock to the cemeteries, and after attending service in the chapels belonging to them, in memory of and honour to their departed friends, take a meal over their graves!

At a very early hour the never-wearied holiday folks may be seen setting forth with bag and baggage on foot and in vehicles. The food is carried in the first place into the chapels, and laid upon the table in the middle. There is generally a large round loaf in the midst of a dish; and round



about it the red-painted Easter eggs, salt, gingerbread, oranges, and lemons. In the midst of the loaf a lighted taper is always stuck, without which a Russian, no more than a Gheber, can observe a religious solemnity, the clear flickering flame being to him always a symbol of the spiritual.

A Flemish pencil might produce the strangest picture in the world by a faithful representation of this oddly-furnished banquet, particularly as the taste of the purveyors varies considerably. Every one has his loaf of a different form from the rest; one has added a dish of rice and plums, another a pot of honey, and a third some other dish, according to his means. On every loaf a little book is laid. In one I found written on one page, "This book belongs to Anna Timofeyeffna" (Anna Timotheus' daughter), and on the next page, "This book is inscribed to the memory of my dear father, Fedor Paulovitsh, and my good mother, Elizabeth Petroffna." On a third page stood the names of Gregor Sergei and Maria. They call these books "*Pominatelnui knigi*," or Books of Remembrance.

After the usual mass, the priests approach the strangely-loaded tables and sing prayers for the dead, swinging the censers all the while. They turn over the leaves of the before-mentioned books, and introduce the names there found in the prayer. When this general prayer and consecration is over, the people disperse about the churchyard; each party seek the graves of their friends, particularly of those lately lost, and weep over them. The greater number mourn in silence; but some, whose sorrow is yet new, cast themselves in despair upon the earth, and give it vent aloud. On one such occasion I noticed particularly one old woman, whose voice of lamentation resounded over the whole burying-ground. I went up to her and asked for whom she mourned. She raised herself and answered for a young married daughter. Then she threw herself down again with her face to the grass, and cried into the grave as if her child could hear: "Ah, my dearest daughter, why hast thou forsaken me? Ah thou loveliest! thou young one! why hast thou left thy old mother with her seventy years? Couldst thou not wait till she had gone before thee? Ah my daughter, is it not against nature that the child should leave her mother un'tended? And thy little son, thy Fedor, he too is left. Alas, alas, my daughter, son and mother are left alone!"

I cannot express how deeply the lamentation of this poor old woman affected me, as she chanted her sorrow in a kind of church melody; now and then ceasing entirely, and burying her gray care-worn head in the grass.

Thus she mourned till the priests came to her grave. They in the meantime paraded the churchyard with burning tapers and crucifixes, and performed a special service over every grave where it was desired, the "books of remembrance" being handed to them for the purpose. The priests were followed by troops of unfortunate persons, cripples and beggars, who expected to receive part of the food in alms. I saw several whose sacks had been so abundantly stored with eggs, that they might have begun trade with them. Some of the mourners gave the whole of what they had brought, and made thus a worthy offering to the departed. My poor old woman was among the number; I helped her to divide some of the loaves, a task her trembling hands refused to perform. The majority, I am sorry to say, spread their napkins over the graves, arranged their food upon them, not forgetting the wine and brandy-bottles, and set to

work with as good an appetite as if the day had been preceded by seven years' of Egyptian famine instead of a Russian Easter. These ghastly banqueting-tables and the revelling groups around them formed the strangest spectacle I ever saw in my life! The priests, of course, came in for a share, and tasted something at every grave. I approached one company, consisting of some official persons, among whom there was one decorated with a couple of orders. These people had covered a long grave with a large table-cloth, and had loaded it abundantly from a store in their carriage, which was drawn up close by, and out of which they were continually fetching fresh supplies! Two priests were among the revellers, and were challenged more frequently than any others of the party. Not before night were the dead left in peace in their last resting-place, and many, unfortunately very many, left it in a condition which may be said to have turned the day of remembrance into one of complete forgetfulness.

The great excesses committed at this season are particularly misplaced when the digestive system has been so much lowered in tone, and cause much sickness among the lower class of Russians; so that, for many, their holidays are attended by very evil consequences. The hospitals are never so full as after Easter; and, according to the statement of a physician to me, statistical writers, in giving the bills of mortality for the several months, might safely quote the Easter holidays as in some measure accounting for the great number of deaths in April.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE GARDENS AND VILLAS.

THE sixtieth degree of northern latitude crosses the suburbs of St. Petersburg. Since the creation of the world no other city has displayed so much splendour and luxury, so near the eternal ices of the Pole, as this imperial residence; and the neighbourhood of the Baltic Sea is perhaps the only one where such an attempt in such a parallel could have succeeded.

The parallel under which St. Petersburg has built palaces and cultivated gardens is the same under which in Siberia the Ostiaks and Tungusians find a scanty nourishment of moss for their reindeer, and where the Kamtschadale drives his dogs over never-melting ice.\* In the same circle where St. Petersburg enjoys every luxury of the civilized and uncivilized world, the Greenlander and Esquimaux, with their seal fat and train oil, barely keep alive the feeble glimmer of vegetation rather than life. Swampy Livonia, which even the Poles call harsh and raw, the province whence come the wild and pitiless snow-storms, called by the

\* The greater part of the Tungusians live further south. Okhotsk lies one degree, Tobolsk two, and the southern point of Kamtschaka nearly nine degrees further south than St. Petersburg.

Prussians Courland weather, are to the St. Petersburgers very agreeable and tolerably warm southern provinces. In Poland the Russian begins to look about him for tropical vegetation; and of the nebulous Germania, whose frigora and grey skies inspire the shuddering Italian to strike the elegiac chords of his harp, the Petersburger thinks as of a land "where the orange-trees bloom."

No city in Europe stands in such close relation to the beasts of the wilderness as St. Petersburg. Even at Stockholm a tolerable number of miles intervene between the city and the den of the wolf; at St. Petersburg, the lurking-places of these gaunt animals, and the palaces of the princes, are within a neighbourly distance. It is a remarkable proof of the wildness of the environs of St. Petersburg, that between breakfast and dinner a man may go on a wolf or bear-hunt, as he may on a hare-hunt from Berlin. In hard winters hungry wolves have approached the suburbs, and even the neighbourhood of the imperial palace, in search of food. The imperial couriers despatched between the Winter Palace and the neighbouring residences have, even of late years, fallen more than once a prey to these animals: and there are in St. Petersburg many ladies whose elegant Parisian toilette has been exposed to dangerous proximity with the shaggy lords of the forest. I was told by one lady that she had in a garden scared a wolf with her parasol; and by another how she had been surprised by a bear while reading on a bench in the garden of her villa close to St. Petersburg, and how she had thrown a romance of George Sand at his head! The Russians maintain that the bear is a great coward, and will never attack unless wounded or otherwise irritated. They relate many odd effects of sudden fright upon him, which, however they may merit the attention of the naturalist, can scarcely be related here. A boy was once sent from a country-house to fetch bread; he came back without it, and said that he had met a bear on his way, and thrown the loaves at his head. On returning to the place indicated the bread was found there, and the bear not far off—dead. The people maintain that he died of a fit caused by the fright. All this shows how much the Fauns of the forest have still the advantage of Ceres and Flora in the environs of St. Petersburg!

"For heaven's sake send me a picture of the sun," said a friend to me, as I was setting off for the south (*i. e.* Germany); "it seems to me years since I have seen the glorious divinity!" If in the other parts of the European world the German Apollo does not pass for the most attractive of gods, we may judge from the above remark what a St. Petersburg Phœbus must be like! To feel this rightly one must have lived there; one must have exchanged the pale grey of the St. Petersburg sky for the south, to know how beautiful, how enchanting can appear that German heaven which the French and Italians have so much to say against. Our hearts beat, and a tear of poetical emotion moistens our eyes, when we sing of the land of the citron and the myrtle. Even thus is the tenderness of a St. Petersburger awakened for countries where cherry and plum-trees are to be met with in the highways. According to the St. Petersburg calendar there are only ninety days when sunshine is to be expected, and then the smile of heaven is not seldom mingled with a frown. Their firmament is no firm lofty azure vault, but a grayish tent-cloth constantly fluttering in the wind.

St. Petersburg is not, however, more defective in its roof than in its



flooring. What in Vienna and Paris is a firm rocky footing, is in St. Petersburg a bottomless morass. The swampy nature of the soil oozes through the pavement and woodwork in spring and autumn; and although millions on millions are lavished yearly for paving the streets and mending the roads, bridges and canals for draining foundations and the like, yet the site of the city is so little solid and secure, that behind every garden-wall the soil is still a wild, marshy, uneven swamp, as when the Titans of yore beheld it. In our towns, at least in the suburbs, every house stands in the midst of trees, vines, and shrubs, and bloom and perfume grace every neglected corner; but at St. Petersburg every garden stands in the midst of a morass; and where the spade has not been at work, the ugly bog still stares you in the face. With us (I mean at Vienna, Dresden, Hamburg, Frankfort, indeed about almost all German cities) Nature herself half forms a garden: there are hills, valleys, flowery meadows, a variety of trees, or at least a firm soil to tread on, and an endurable canopy of sky; and to make a garden, we have often nothing to do but to lay out the walks. At St. Petersburg there is not one of these things! The firm ground must be made by art; the gravel walks must be founded by the hand of the carpenter. If meadows are wanted, the turf must be laid down sod by sod; if hills, the earth must be thrown up; if a valley, it must be dug. Those who desire warmth must heat their stoves; those who wish for a sky must paint one in their drawing-rooms.

It is only between four walls we can enjoy calm weather, or any of the beauties of Nature in St. Petersburg: bright colours are to be seen only on walls. The pastures and meadows are dirty, gray, and yellow; no friendly green presents itself any where but on the roofs of the houses. The sky is misty and watery; the stars glitter from the blue cupolas of the churches, but none twinkle any where else. The paler the sun's face, the more resplendent are the summits of the towers; the fainter the moonlight, the brighter shine the gorgeous palaces. Heavens! what cost, what toil and trouble had Peter the Great spared the St. Petersburgers, past, present, and to come, had he followed up his first idea of building his new capital on the shores of the Black Sea! So many foreign ambassadors would not then wonder at the rapidity with which they grow old—and there would be prettier girls. St. Petersburg would have acacias, laurels, and pomegranates, instead of birches, firs, and cranberries; and so many millions would not pass half their lives in considering how they and their families are to be kept warm.

The only thing that was of use to the St. Petersburgers when they set about the embellishment and planting of their environs, was the beautiful clear, deep Neva, with its many branches, to which may be added the group of hills, called the Duderhoff mountains, and the coast of the gulf of Finland. All those who seek the rural landscape have taken refuge either in the islands, on those hills, or along that coast.

#### THE ISLANDS.

In the whole Delta of the Neva there are more than forty islands, great and small. Some of these islands, although all belong to the precincts of the city, are still perfectly desert, inundated by the sea and the Neva, visited only by seals or by wolves, who come over the ice.

Such are the Volny islands, the Trukhtanoff islands and some others. They are swampy and overgrown with birch, and scarcely known by name in St. Petersburg; others contain magazines for powder and other stores. The largest are the often-named Vassili Ostroff, the St. Petersburg island, and the islands formed by the Moika, Fontanka, and the other canals. These are almost entirely occupied by the houses of the city, and form the centre of this island-metropolis. North-west of the St. Petersburg island lie five others of moderate size, separated by the arms of the greater and lesser Nevka, and the Neva—these are the islands, emphatically so called the “Garden Islands” of St. Petersburg, Krestovsky (the Cross Island)—Kammenoi Ostroff (the Stone Island), Petrofskoi Ostroff (Peter’s Island), Yelaginskoi Ostroff (Yelagin Island), and the Apothecary Island.\* Originally these islands yielded nothing but shrubs, some few old oaks, the senior veterans of St. Petersburg, and particularly birches and firs, with which the greater part of the islands are still covered. These primeval woods and primeval swamps were invaded by the art of gardening towards the close of the last century. Man cleared them in some measure, made gravel walks, planted new trees, such as could be made to grow under the 60th parallel of latitude, left standing the old oaks under which the Ingrians had sacrificed, and also here and there a little Finnish fishing-village, which, in the midst of increasing luxury, displayed, in the most piquant manner, the contrast of times, and the extremes of social life. Bridges were thrown from island to island, canals made, and above all imperial pleasure palaces and pretty villas (*Datshas*) were built on the banks of the river.

The greater part of these gardens have been planted under Alexander and Nicholas, to whom almost every Russian town is indebted for its public garden. They were begun under Catherine, and hence perhaps the name *Datsha* (gift) for villa, for she made many grants of ground and even of whole islands to her favourites, that they might build and lay out villas and houses there. The Yelagin Island was first given to a Melgunoff, then to a Yelagin; it now belongs to the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna. Each of the islands has its particular destination, and is devoted to a particular class. Yelagin belongs almost exclusively to the court; it is entirely occupied by the imperial chateau and gardens. The court generally resides there in spring, which is the most brilliant time for the islands. On this island there are no private houses, and no other amusement for the public than walking. There is nothing very remarkable in the chateau of Yelagin; it is not to be compared with the gardens and chateau at Potsdam.—Kammenoi Ostroff is the chief island for the villas of the wealthier classes. The houses are built on the banks of the river, all in different styles, one is Gothic, another Italian, a third Chinese, &c.; in this small space specimens are to be found of the taste of all ages and nations in gardening and villa building. Although they have generally cost enormous sums in the erection, and display much luxury, we should look in vain for the architectural grandeur of the Italian villas, the comfort of English country houses, or the simple enjoyment of a German garden. For one charm these *Datshas* are indebted to the severity of the

\* When they say in St. Petersburg “We will go to the islands this summer,” “We will make a party to the islands,” they mean these five Garden Islands, and no others out of the whole forty.

climate, namely, for the great abundance of flowers. The hot-houses are profusely supplied, and in the warm weather, the balconies, doors, and windows of the Datshas are adorned with multitudes of exotic plants, as the peasant's houses in many parts of Germany are with May-flowers at Whitsuntide.

Krestovsky, or the Cross Island, lies before the courtly Yelagin and Kammenoi Ostroff, towards the sea, and is larger than the two former put together. Numerous avenues have been opened through the thick primeval birch and pinewood of this island, and afford agreeable views of the Gulf of Finland. This island is peculiarly the resort of the lower classes of St. Petersburg; hither flock the Mushik and the Kupez in gay gondolas, to enjoy, in the woods, their national amusements of swings and Russian mountains, and here on holidays smokes on the grass under every pine-group the favourite *samovar*, round which may be seen encamped a party of long-beards, gossiping, singing, and clamouring.

The German part of the population have appropriated to themselves another island; it is on Petroffsky that the German prefers to take his cup of coffee and indulge himself with his pipe. The arrangements here are on a smaller scale; and here only are to be found milk and cake gardens, coffee-houses and taverns, as in the neighbourhood of our towns. It must not be understood, however, that there is any thing exclusive here, and datshas, chateaux, and Russians mingle here as elsewhere.

As a thorough St. Petersburger, firmly of opinion that no city in the world is to be compared with his own, cherishes a prejudice against all that is not St. Petersburgish, so does he most particularly prize these magic islands, and is not a little astonished, when a foreigner, to whom he displays their splendour, is not equally enchanted. The St. Petersburgers can by no means understand how any one should hesitate to place the island gardens by the side of those of Babylon, Damascus, or Shiraz, or to count St. Petersburg as a fifth paradise. Passing their whole lives in a continued tumult, in droshkies, or coaches-and-four; having never sat buried in thought, or absorbed by a book in the still fragrance of a honeysuckle arbour; having, in short, no such pleasant corners themselves, they cannot at all understand what a German finds wanting in their gardens when he says, "Yes, it is very fine, but not half so pleasant as in our country." Nature herself with us supplies what art leaves wanting to the decoration of the garden, and every humble citizen and peasant helps to make the picture more complete and luxuriant. In St. Petersburg, what the government and the rich leave undone, remains incomplete; no generally-diffused spirit of gardening is at hand, and the wind whistles shrilly through every opening.

Nevertheless, and in spite of us sighing foreigners, the islands have their favourable side; the question is only, to choose well the time and occasion to view them. Before all things let no one think of going on foot, as if he were going to the Thiergarten of Berlin, or the Prater of Vienna. It should be remembered that in St. Petersburg droshkies are always reckoned upon, that all the gardens and buildings are scattered over an extensive surface, and that these tableaux on a large scale are best seen the faster you drive by them. Take then, if possible, a carriage with four horses, dash through the desolate quarter of St. Petersburg Ostroff with the speed of the wind, and pass the train of brilliant equipages that throng the avenues of Yelagin and Krestovsky on holidays and Sundays at the same rate; call upon a friend, if you have one, in any of these elegant swamp-villas, and enjoy the tea or evening collation upon his luxurious divans, and in the midst of all the costly decoration of his reception-rooms. Then towards



sunset have a gondola, manned by half-a-dozen sturdy fellows, and row down the arm of the Neva to the Gulf of Finland. Watch there the globe of the northern summer-sun sink into the lap of Thetis, and hurry back through the magic July night, and row round some of the islands, taking a wide sweep, for there is plenty of room here on the water also, punching and driving your gondoliers, meanwhile, to make them go the faster. Listen then from the water to the sounds from the thick forest, gaze on the lights from the fishing-villages, the late illumination of the brilliant Datshas, and harken to the nightly doings on the islands, where all is as loud by night as it was by day; and at last, return home like a night-wandering ghost, when, towards one o'clock, the cold dew announces the return of the sun.

In the way home admire on the Prospekt the palaces gleaming bright in the nightly reflex of the sun, and when, on the following morning, in drawing your bed curtains at eleven, you recal the singular dream of the past night, you will understand why the islands are so highly esteemed.

A St. Petersburg friend may take you to breakfast at Talon's, or to a promenade on the English quay, but if he be prudent he will content himself with that, and not propose a walk to the St. Petersburg villages. The villages that surround our capitals are the prettiest that can be conceived; the Hamburg villages on the Elbe, those on the Maine by Frankfort, even the turnip-planted hamlets of our Sandy Jerusalem, are charming, full of rural beauty, and abounding in subjects for the sketch-book of the artist. The "villages" so much talked of in St. Petersburg are five in number, Great and Little Okhta, Bolshaya Derevnya, Malaya Derevnya, and Tshornaya Retshka. They lie in long endless (every thing in St. Petersburg is without end) lines on the Neva, the two first-named opposite the upper, and the two latter opposite the lower part of the city. The houses of these villages are of fir-tree logs roughly put together, and planted in regular rows like a regiment of soldiers. From the houses, hardly one of which has the ornament even of a tree, the long cabbage and cucumber plantations stretch into the country on the land side, and a road along the banks of the river is lined on holidays with carriages driving up and down as they do in the avenues on the Garden Islands.

Those persons whose revenues are too moderate for a Gothic or Chinese Datsha, engage a summer residence in some of these deal houses, and enjoy there as much rural happiness as tea-drinking, card-playing, and hard driving can afford them. One cannot but admire the modesty of their demands in this respect!

At Novaya Derevnya is the new establishment of Struve for mineral waters, a magnificent house, with elegant saloons, and promenades under cover. It stands in the midst of a bare swamp, nearly four (English) miles from the centre of the town. In summer this is a favourite resort of the fashionable world of the islands; an unprejudiced person finds it difficult to comprehend why so useful an establishment was formed in such a place. Those who drive out and back again every day to enjoy this mock Carlsbad might have gone to the real one for the same expense of time and money.

The gardens of Stroganoff and Besborodko—the former is open to the public—have also made considerable inroads into the territories of the divinities of swamp and mud. Altogether the possessions of St. Petersburg in garden land may be reckoned at 25 millions of square yards.

The villages of Great and Little Okhta are remarkable as the site of St.

Petersburg's predecessor, the old Swedish fortress of Nyenschanz, at a still earlier period called Landscrona, or, in Russian, Venetz Semli (the crown of the land). For the possession of this little fortress and trading town, the Swedes and Russians (not the Muscovites, but the republicans of Novgorod), disputed as early as the thirteenth century. It was generally held by Sweden, and through its mediation a peaceful commercial intercourse was sometimes kept up between the two countries. The last traces of this fortress have now vanished and are forgotten.\*

#### THE SEA-COAST.

PETER THE GREAT—every chapter that treats of Russia must begin with Peter the Great, for not only St. Petersburg, but every twig and branch of Russian public or social life, the history of cities, roads, canals, public institutions, the annals of gardens, buildings, manufactories, mines, and mills, all begin with Peter the Great. Peter the Great then did what no ruler ever did before him, he built his capital on hostile ground. Perhaps he thought like the officer, who, to animate his soldiers to the charge, threw his own standard into the midst of the enemy: let our dearest treasure be in the hands of an enemy, and we shall fight the more zealously to make it ours again. Often, while the building of the city was going on, he had to exchange the chisel and mallet for the sword, and drive back the enemy from the very gates of his infant capital. On one of these suburb battle-fields, he built in the year 1711, without the city and close to the sea, the castle and garden of Catherinenhoff, as a memorial of a victory obtained over the Swedes. At first it was only the summer residence of his consort Catherine, and of the grand-duchesses Anne and Elizabeth. Their wooden palace stands yet, but the gardens are greatly extended. For a long time these and the "Summer Garden" were the only pleasure resorts of the kind for the citizens, and still, probably from habit, these gardens are visited on the first of May. On that day all St. Petersburg is in motion; the poor on foot, the young exquisites on horseback, the ladies in their carriages, all flock to Catherinenhoff to hail the coming of the fine season, even though it be held expedient, as it generally is, to go well wrapped up in bearskins.

The gardens are full of bowling-greens and restaurants, and while smoking a cigar before one of these restaurants we may enjoy the pleasure of seeing half the magnificoes of the empire move slowly past in their carriages-and-four; the senators, the star-covered generals, the reverend bishops and metropolitans, the bearded merchants, and the "foreign guests," a spectacle of which, often as it is repeated, a St. Petersburg is never weary. The carriages move after a certain prescribed plan the whole day long, like horses in a mill. It is enough to make one giddy to think that all the gay world throughout Russia are moving about their many thousand towns, at the same pace on the same day. The emperor, whose presence crowns the festival, is generally on horseback, with the princes and a brilliant staff. The St. Petersburgers, who are accustomed to keep all holidays in common with their adored emperor

\* In the old papers of a merchant of Reval, I read German commercial letters dated from Nyenschanz on the Neva; and I saw in St. Petersburg an old oaken clothes-press that came from Nyenschanz—the only antiquities, perhaps, that St. Petersburg possesses.

and his court, cannot at all relish ours, where this luminary is wanting, in whose magnificent presence all appears so much brighter, and whom to admire is the habit of their lives. The arrival of the emperor is looked for as if he were the representative of the spring, and when he has passed by, the throng drop off one after the other, and go home again, as if the sun himself had disappeared.

From Catherinenhoff, a series of country-houses stretch along the coast of the gulf to Peterhof and Oranienbaum. In the neighbourhood of the city the coast is low and flat, a part of the inundated Delta of the Neva; farther on towards the southern shores of the gulf, the coast rises into chalky cliffs, and to an abrupt height of from two to three hundred feet. This part of the coast is called the Klint. West of this Klint lies the cathedral of Reval, further to the east the cascade of the Narova falls from the Klint at nine English miles from the sea,—there is probably nowhere else in Europe so considerable a waterfall so near the sea; Peterhof and Oranienbaum lie on the side of the Klint, and a number of garden terraces belonging to private villas descend from it to the sea.

The road to Zarskoye Selo excepted, the Peterhof coast-road is decidedly the liveliest and best inhabited of any in the precincts of St. Petersburg. It is broad, finely paved, with excellent bridges, and granite verst stones. It is a proof of the general monotony that reigns in all things here, that the verst stones are the only landmarks in this desert. People will say, for instance, "We are living this year in the Peterhof road, at the seventh verst;" or "The Orlof Datscha stands at the eleventh verst;" "We will breakfast at the *Traiteur's* at the fourteenth verst;" as if these milestones were pyramids. But so it is, there are neither valleys, brooks, nor smiling villages wherewith to distinguish places; and people can find their way only by reckoning the milestones.

The centre of Peterhof is the old castle, built by Peter the Great. Although every emperor and empress has made additions and alterations, the character of the whole is the same as that of all the houses built by Peter the Great, the old summer palace, the Menzikoff palace, &c.; even the yellow colour of the castle is always renewed. Like all the other buildings, its architecture is very insignificant in character, and deserves as little to be mentioned with Versailles, and the other French chateaux which may have served as models, as the Kasan church deserves to be compared with St. Peter's at Rome. Animating as the view is from the lofty coast over the sea, covered with ships of war and merchantmen, it is strange enough that the main front of the castle should be turned landwards. Downwards to the seashore, the garden descends in terraces, adorned with fountains and waterfalls. The basins, the Neptunes, storks, swans, and nymphs, the tritons, dolphins, painted rocks and grottoes, are copied from the engravings in Hushfeld's *Art of Gardening*; but we cannot pass the oaks and limetrees planted by Peter himself without reverence. The smaller buildings of *Marly* and *Monplaisir*, which lie under these trees, as wings to the larger edifice, remind the beholder, as many a house in the city has done, of the modest domestic arrangements of the carpenter of Saardam, the great reformer of eastern Europe.

The castle has one highly-interesting apartment, containing a collection of 368 pictures. They are all portraits, executed by a certain Count Rotali in the time of Catherine the Second, in the course of a journey through the fifty governments of Russia, probably to afford the empress



an idea of the wealth of her great empire in physiognomies and beauty. They are all beautiful young girls, whom the count has painted in picturesque situations, and in their national costume. One cannot but admire the inventive genius of the count in giving a different position and different expression to all these 368 faces. One pretty girl is knitting diligently, another embroidering; one peeps archly from behind a curtain, another gazes expectingly from a window; another leans over a chair, as if listening to a lover; a third, reclining on cushions, seems lost in thought. One slumbers so softly and so sweetly that a man must be a Laplander in apathy not to wish for a kiss; this stands before a glass, combing her beautiful hair, that has buried herself up to the ears in fur, leaving visible only a pair of tender rosy lips, and soft blue eyes gleaming from under the wild bear's skin. There are also some excellent portraits of old people—two in particular—an old man with a staff, and an old woman by the fire. This collection is unique in its kind, and would be invaluable for the physiognomist, if he could be certain that these portraits were as exact and faithful as they are pleasing and tasteful. But this is doubtful, for they all bear, undeniably, rather the stamp of the French school than of the Russian, Tartar, Finnish, or any other nationality within the Russian empire. It is also a suspicious circumstance, that they were done by a gentleman for a lady. Probably behind every graceful attitude some flattering homage to the empress lies concealed. The other apartments do not contain any thing very remarkable. In one are the little table and benches with which the Emperors Alexander and Nicholas played as children; in another, some carving and turner's work of Peter the Great. In one room we were shown the blots of ink, made by this emperor or that, while engaged in his boyish studies; and in another we saw on the ceiling an extraordinary picture, representing a whole corps of angels playing from notes! every one with his music lying on a cloud by way of desk!—while a fifth room contained all the gods of Greece, also reclining on clouds. The old Russian who acted as our guide remarked, evidently with no small pride at his superior enlightenment, that the old Greeks were very stupid and superstitious, to believe that the gods lay about on clouds in this way, as it was very well known *now*, that the thing was an impossibility.

To be seen to advantage, Peterhof should be visited early in July, when the court gives the brilliant and renowned fêtes, to which, once for all, the whole 500,000 inhabitants of St. Petersburg are invited. All the rest of the year it looks as if no one were at home; but during those three days all is life and splendour, revelry and display. The sums paid for lodging are incredible. There are some people whom it costs 20,000 rubles daily for lodging alone. This sounds extravagant, but it is literally true. The expense is incurred thus:—For a person of rank it would not do to lodge with any of the village proprietors; he must have a house of his own. A piece of ground is purchased, therefore, for 20,000 or 30,000 rubles; a *datsha* erected at a nominal charge of 80,000 to 150,000, but in the end, when the house is finished, it comes nearer to 200,000 or 300,000. The interest of this money, at 6 per cent., would be from 15,000 to 18,000 rubles. The maintenance and wages for the overseers, stewards, and others, are enormous; they may amount yearly to about 40,000 rubles. When we further calculate that the whole wooden palace cannot last more than forty or fifty years, or will be sold again in much fewer for a mere nothing, and that it is only inhabited for three days in the year, it

will be admitted that the calculation is not an extravagant one. The Russian nobles do not reckon thus, but they would be frightened if any one, with the help of the four rules, were to demonstrate to them how dearly this three days' amusement costs them.

### THE DUDERHOF HILLS.

The chief summer residence of the Russian emperor among the Duderhof-hills (Duddergovski Gori) is Zarskoye Selo. Like the majority of all that is beautiful or useful in Russia, it owes its origin to Peter the Great. He built the first house here, and planted, eternal praise and honour to the illustrious gardener that he did so, the avenues of plane-trees with his own hand. But it was Elizabeth who built the large and magnificent castle, which was further embellished by Catherine; and after the great fire, the destiny of every Russian palace, and of every Russian town, it was restored by Alexander. The interior offers treasures and magnificence enough to procure a Sheherazade, another truce of a thousand nights, to describe chambers of amber and mother of pearl; columns of jasper, agate, and porphyry; Chinese, Persian, and Turkish halls; colonnades, marble baths, mosaic pavements, malachite vases, kiosks, even whole Chinese villages, Dutch and Swiss cow-houses, triumphal arches, rostral pillars, and bronze statues, which Catherine erected to her favourites, and Alexander to his "dear companions in arms," intermingled with fields of roses, hermitages, artificial ruins, Roman tombs, grottoes, and waterfalls.

The gardens of Zarskoye Selo are certainly the most carefully kept in the world; the trees and flowers are watched and inspected with the most anxious minuteness. An old invalid soldier commands his 500 or 600 men as gardeners and overseers. After every falling leaf runs a veteran to pick it up; and after a violent north wind they have enough to do, as may be well imagined. Every tiny leaf that falls in pond or canal, is carefully fished out; they dust and trim and polish the trees and paths in the gardens, as they do the looking-glasses and furniture of the saloons; every stone that is kicked aside is laid strait again, and every blade of grass kept in a proper position. I once saw here an inquiry instituted about a broken flower, and carried on with as much solemnity as if it had been a capital offence. All the gardeners were called together, the inspector held the flower in his hand, and every possible question was put, as to in whose division, and out of what bed, the flower might be; whether plucked by a child, or broken by a dog; and all this investigation proceeded with the profoundest seriousness, and the closest contemplation of the *corpus delicti*; threats were lavished, rewards for the discovery of the offender were promised, &c. The cost of all this polishing and furbishing alone is above 100,000 rubles yearly, but then the sacrifice keeps the gardens in the order of a ball-room. They say that the Russian nation requires a despotic, all-meddling government: a Russian garden certainly requires sharp discipline and a rigid police, to prevent all art and arrangement from flying away in storm and tempest. The gardens of Pavlovski are less magnificent but more attractive than those of Zarskoye Selo. They lie but a few versts from the latter, and also among the Duderhoff hills. The castle of Pavlovsk, the summer residence of the deceased empress mother Maria, is more simple. According to

Swinin, the walks in these gardens have a length of 150 versts; and there is so much variety in the disposition of them, and in the shrubs and grouping of the trees, that Russian literature may boast of several books written on this subject alone.

Of late Pavlovsk and Zarskoye Selo are much more frequented, in consequence of the railroad that connects them with the city, and they have now become the favourite resort for citizens of the middle classes, who flock hither in such numbers in summer to dine, drink champagne and punch, and so forth (not to sip a cup of coffee and carry off a remainder of sugar, as with us), that they alone would keep the line in full activity. The town of Pavlovsk consists almost entirely of small wooden houses, which are hired in the summer as country residences. The German colonists in the environs do their best to increase these pleasures by providing fresh milk, good bread, clean rooms, and other things which are generally looked for in vain in the Finnish and Russian villages.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### CRONSTADT.

ESTHONIA and Finland combine to form the Gulf of Finland, one of the three huge arms that the Baltic stretches into the northern lands. The entrance to the Gulf lies between Revel and Abo. In the middle it expands into a wide lake, then, narrowing more and more, ends in the small bay of Cronstadt, which is, in fact, only the expanded mouth of the Neva, or rather the basin through which the waters of the Delta reach the open sea. The bay is shallow, its average depth scarcely reaching twelve feet, and affording a sharply-defined and narrow channel for vessels that do not draw more than eight or nine feet water. There, where the sea properly begins, marking the limits of the bay, and enclosing it almost to a lake, the coast of the Kettle Island rises above the level of the sea. This island exchanged its former Finnish name of Retusari, or Rat Island, for its present, when the armed delegates of Peter the Great, in the year 1703, drove off the Swedes. The latter, in retreating, left nothing behind them but a great camp-kettle, which the Russian conquerors reared in triumph on a pole as a trophy of victory, and immediately baptized the island after it.

Peter soon became aware that Kotlinoi Ostroff must be the key and out-work for the defence of his new capital, and he began himself to fortify it. The mouths of the Neva are many, and a multitude of ramparts were necessary to put all in a state of defence. The islands at these mouths are extraordinarily low and swampy, and decline so gradually into the sea, that the erection of fortifications would have cost enormous sums. The Kettle Island lies in the midst of the water directly before the bay of Cronstadt, nearly semi-distant from the northern Carelian as from the southern Ingrian coast. Thus, there remain but two arms of the sea to guard



against the entrance of a hostile fleet. The navigation of the northern is by nature difficult, on account of the sandbanks: the sinking of vessels filled with stones made it altogether inaccessible. The southern arm, although nearly seven versts broad, has an exceedingly narrow channel close to the island. This arm had therefore to be invested with defences as with a coat of mail. For this purpose the coasts of the island, and that of Ingria, if not particularly good, were at least much more so than the low flat margins of the Neva islands, and a number of rocks and islets offered themselves as natural bases for forts and citadels. Peter the Great built the fort of Kronshlott on the southern side, and began one on the island itself. Succeeding governments completed these; and Paul I., in providing the rock of Riesbank with fortifications, under whose cannon any vessel must pass to enter the bay, seems to have perfected the defences of Cronstadt.

Cronstadt may be considered as the water-gate of St. Petersburg. Here is the chief station of the Baltic fleet, here the chief custom-house, and here all ships coming from the sea anchor. The smaller vessels run up to the mouths of the Neva; the larger stop here to discharge a part of their cargo before going further, or they discharge it altogether into the magazines of Cronstadt that belong to the St. Petersburg merchants.

A multitude of small vessels and steam-boats, which start at regular hours, maintain a communication with the capital. When a favourable wind brings up at once whole fleets of a hundred or more large vessels from the sea, or when the Russian war-fleet is preparing for a cruise, there are as many steam-boats and sailing-boats, cutters, schooners, brigs, gondolas, and boats, fetching and carrying intelligence, merchandise, and passengers, as there are droshkies, britshkas, and caleches on the Prospekt.

The bay of Cronstadt is as lifeless a desert in winter, that is nearly six entire months, as it is animated in summer. The whole surface is frozen in winter to one solid level, broken only by three roads—one from St. Petersburg, one from Oranienbaum, and one from Sestrabeck. These roads are indicated by signal posts: and on that to St. Petersburg, which is above 30 versts long, is a station built for rest and refreshment. In former times these ice-fields were often animated enough. Russian history tells of many battles fought on the crystal floor of the bay, over the heads of the fishes and seals.

The Kettle Island has a length of seven, and a breadth of from two to three versts. Towards the north-west it ends in a promontory called Tolbukina-Kossa, on which a lighthouse is erected. Its greatest breadth is to the south-east; and here Cronstadt, with its harbour and fortifications, is situated. Nearly the whole surface of the island, where it has not been improved by art, is bare and desolate, either sandy or swampy, and scattered over with blocks of granite like the opposite coast of Carelia. Formerly it contained no dwellings but a few Finnish fishing-huts; now it bears a city containing sometimes 30,000 inhabitants; and from its havens, whence only a few poor fishermen issued two hundred years ago, two-thirds of the foreign trade of Russia are now directed.\* If Nature had but favoured this island with a few more fathoms' elevation, and broken its

\* In general Cronstadt with the garrison has not more than 10,000 inhabitants; but during the summer, when trade is most active, it has more than 30,000 workmen, sailors, soldiers, merchants,—Russian, German, and English.

sides into some deep creeks, it would have spared the Russian government an enormous outlay of money and labour. The harbours, docks, and bastions of Cronstadt have cost within the last century millions and millions of rubles, and thousands of human lives. Had Neptune but touched the island with his earth-shaking trident, or Vulcan driven his fires through its clefts, the greater part of this human toil would have been unnecessary.

The harbour for vessels of war will contain about thirty-five large ships. A strong mole, 450 fathoms long, protects it from the violence of the waves. Near this lies "the middle haven," destined for the fitting out of ships-of-war. In the dock-yards of St. Petersburg, only the hulls of vessels are built; they are then with infinite labour transported on "camels"\* over the shallow bay of Cronstadt to this "middle haven," to be finished and fully equipped. The haven is surrounded by powder-magazines, and by immense quantities of anchors, cordage, tar, and other naval stores from the arsenal of Sestrabek.

Further to the west lies the merchant's harbour, capable of receiving a thousand vessels, and therefore the most interesting and animated of the three. To the north-west it is protected by a bastion of granite-blocks. A promenade on this bastion is the most agreeable in Cronstadt. Hence may be obtained the best view of the life and bustle in the three harbours. Opposite are the improving fortifications of Kronshlott, and from the extremity, the prospect of the wide sea, with the vessels ever appearing and disappearing in the horizon.

The waters of the bay are fresh, except when a storm blows from the west, and makes them slightly salt. This freshness of the water is said to be the cause of the rapid decay of the ships, but the shocks they receive from the ice may have more to do with this than the want of salt. From the middle and the merchant's harbour two great canals run into the interior of the city. The quays on these canals, as well as those of the harbours, are of granite, and in a style of magnificence such as is hardly to be seen in any other commercial city.†

The canal running from the middle harbour, which was begun by Pèter the Great and finished by Elizabeth, brings up the ships of war to the dock for repair. It can admit ten large vessels at once. The whole basin, which is formed of granite, can, by means of a steam-engine, be laid dry in two days, and filled again within six hours.

The fortifications, harbours, canals, and dock, are the proper objects of admiration in Cronstadt. Except these, all is of an ordinary character; neither the churches nor the houses have any thing remarkable in them, the latter are for the most part but one story high. Besides the Russian Greek churches, there are an English, a German Lutheran, and a Catholic church. A Noble club, a Gostinnoi dvor, barracks, hospitals, cadet

\* These camels are gigantic chests, big enough to hold a ship of the line. When the hull is built, and is ready to be sent down the Neva, such a chest is brought into the Admiralty dock-yard and filled with water till it sinks so deeply as to admit the vessel to float in through an aperture in the side. This done, the water is pumped out again, when the "camel" begins to rise, till at last it is enabled to float down the river with its singular passenger. It is then towed by a steam-vessel to Cronstadt, and generally without accident, if wind and weather are favourable. Why so inconvenient a dock-yard has not long ago been abandoned, it is difficult to conceive.

† They were erected by the Emperor Nicholas, who has done more for Cronstadt than any former sovereign.

schools, &c. The town is divided into two parts, the division of the Commandant and that of the Admiralty: in the latter there is a summer garden, which boasts of some flowers, said to have been planted by Peter the Great.\*

Cronstadt is the chief station of the Russian fleet. The fleet (like all Russia, the creation of Peter) originated on the little river Yausa, near Moscow, where Peter, with his Dutch friend, Brand, used to sail up and down in an English sloop which had been discovered near Ismailof, and which the Dutchman had repaired and equipped. The water in the Yausa is not always high, and in summer the river is almost dry. Peter caused the sloop to be carried to the little lake of Pereyaslavl, and there he cruised daily with Brand about the creeks of the lake, learned to set the sails, to steer, and to avail himself of opposing winds. The thing pleased the Czar so much, that Brand was obliged to build two more small yachts. Brand was the admiral of the fleet, the emperor pilot, and the crews amounted to about a dozen seamen. At that time there were no other Russian sailors, and for cannon, they had two small guns, scarcely large enough to be heard on the other side of the wood that surrounded the lake. But the play in time became earnest. In 1694 Peter had decided on his plan; he would have a Russian fleet, and Le Fort was named admiral of the fleet that was yet to be created.

From the small lake of Pereyaslavl the fleet passed to the great lake of Peipus; there enemies were found, and engagements took place between the Swedes and Russians. In 1702, the flag taken from a Swedish vessel on the lake of Ladoga, the first trophy of the infant marine of Russia, was carried in triumph into Moscow, and lodged in the Kremlin.

From the lake of Peipus, whose circling coasts had all become Russian, and from the lake of Ladoga, the fleet appeared upon the Baltic; the marine plant, thus carefully nurtured in the interior of the empire, and transported from lake to lake, developed itself with extraordinary rapidity, and spread over the whole surface of that sea. After the first prize had been taken from Sweden, the Russian fleet was kept in action almost exclusively by that power. The disputes of the Swedes and Russians in the gulf of Finland, where both considered themselves legitimate masters, are as old as the existence of the two people. Early powerful on the sea, and at different periods of their history masters of the Baltic, the Swedes remained masters also of the coasts for centuries. On Peter's appearance on the sea, the leaf was turned, and a series of naval battles have at last secured the Baltic provinces to Russia, and by degrees driven the Swedes from every bay and corner of the Gulf of Finland. The first important fight took place in 1715, after the annihilation of the Swedish army at Pultava. From 1703, Peter had sent one vessel after another to sea, gun-boats, galleys, frigates, and even ships of the line of sixty guns and more. By a bold manœuvre, conducted by the Czar himself, he passed his small galleys and cutters over the isthmuses of Angut and Ratzaburg, which separated him from the Swedish fleet, attacked it unexpectedly, captured the admiral himself, Von Ehrenschild, and his ship, forced twelve large vessels to strike, and sailed to the island of Aland, spreading terror to the very heart of the Swedish capital. The battle of

\* In at least eight Russian towns they show some such sacred flowers, said to have been planted by Peter with his own hands.



Angut made the Russian fleet of age in less than twenty years after its birth, and Peter sailed back in triumph to his new capital, to be promoted to the rank of vice-admiral, and to address the following speech to the surrounding nobles:

"My brethren, who among you would have held it possible, thirty years ago, that you should navigate the Baltic with a Russian fleet, and that from Russian families such naval heroes and navigators should spring as we now see before us? Could we then hope that so many able men, distinguished in science, would have hastened from all parts of Europe to assist the advance of our country in science? Did we divine that we should inspire foreign nations with so much respect, that such abundance of renown so soon awaited us? We learn from history that Greece was once the asylum of science and art, and that driven thence, they wandered to other parts of Europe. The negligence and indifference of our forefathers alone are to blame, that the muses did not traverse Poland to reach us. The Poles and Germans once groped in the same darkness of ignorance in which we so recently pined. By the care of their rulers their eyes were opened, and they received a portion of the inheritance of Greece, her civilisation and her arts. The wanderings of human civilization may be compared to the circulation of the blood. I hope that the muses, when they have forsaken Germany, France, and England, may still dwell with us. Look on this new city rising fresh and blooming on the soil conquered by our arms; on the cupolas of these churches, that have arisen under your own eyes; on these schools and academies; behold the thronging masts and sails of our victorious fleet; and you will acknowledge, that it is now our turn. Support me in my undertakings, unite the strictest obedience to the most energetic industry, and we shall soon behold our Russia taking the rank that is her due among the civilized powers of Europe."

After the victory that gave occasion to this speech, the fleet remained inactive under the reign of Peter the Great, and under Catherine the First it retreated timidly into the harbours of Reval and Cronstadt, when blockaded by the English, irritated by Russia's alliance with Spain and Austria. This is the only time that the English and Russian fleets have been opposed to each other, and they did not come to battle then, as a peace was soon afterwards concluded. In the seven years' war, the Russian fleet afforded active and able support to their army which had advanced on Prussia, by blockading the ports, cutting off all assistance by sea, and assisting the land-forces to land on different parts of the coast. Under Peter the Third, troops were to have been landed in Holstein, which this prince designed to conquer, but his sudden death prevented the sailing of the ships. A new impulse was given by Catherine the Second to naval improvement; the fleet in the Black Sea was formed, Europe was circumnavigated, and Russian ships were seen for the first time in the Levant, to protect Russian interests there. The ships which sailed from Cronstadt, and were exposed to the criticism and ridicule of England in 1769, were heavily built, and manned by inexperienced sailors; nevertheless they accomplished the voyage round Europe, after encountering many dangers and adventures, the result of want of skill; and, ill as they may have appeared in comparison with English vessels, they had, no doubt, a considerable advantage over the Turks, for in the following year the battle in the Bay of Tshesme took place, which obtained for the

Orloffs the family name of Tshesmenski, and a triumphal arch in Zarskoye Selo; for the soldiers and sailors who fought there, a medal with the words "Buil" (I was there); and for Russia the command of the Black Sea, and the free navigation of the Dardanelles.

After Catherine had acquired the Crimea, Asoph, and the mouths of the Dnieper, a great deal of pine timber was brought from Volhynia. Dutch and English admirals, German and Greek seamen, were engaged; still the Russian fleet was so little available, that the English, to whose assistance against the French, Catherine had sent her ships, begged her to take them back again, as affording more embarrassment than help. However useless the English found them on that occasion, the Russian ships did good service towards the end of the last century; in 1809, before the peace of Fredericksham, and also at the battle of Navarino, and in the years 1828 and 1829. The Swedes were eventually driven out of the Gulf of Finland, and the Turks from the Black Sea.

No sovereign since Peter the Great has done so much for the Russian navy as Nicholas. At Navarino the English were no longer so discontented with Russian ships, if we may believe that the testimony of Captain Crawford was not a mere matter of courtesy, in acknowledgment of the hospitable reception given him by the Russian fleet, or that he was not influenced by party feeling, to throw the blame of negligence upon the then English ministry. "I cannot refrain from expressing my astonishment," said Captain Crawford, "at the extraordinary advance made by the Russian navy at a time when that of England has been at least stationary. It was truly admirable to see the attention paid by the Russian officers to all that passed on board our ships, and the promptitude with which they applied their newly-acquired knowledge. There is among the Russian naval officers and sailors, an admirable *esprit de corps*, an emulation, a desire to do their best, an enthusiasm for their national fleet, and its prosperity. I could not, as an English naval officer, help feeling somewhat strange at the thought that there should be at Cronstadt twenty-six Russian ships of the line, with 30,000 men on board, and victualled for four months, while, for the protection of our coasts and harbours, our merchantmen in the Baltic, the North Sea, and the Channel, there were only seven ships of the line, and even those not fully manned."

The whole naval force of Russia consists of 350 ships of war, carrying nearly 6000 cannon, and manned by 50,000 men—sailors, soldiers, and gunners. Among these, 40 are ships of the line, from 60 to 120 guns; 35 frigates; 120 gun-boats, of which last the greater part have been organized for the protection of the coast of Finland.

On all the seas which the Russians have reached they have launched ships: on the Baltic, on the Black Sea, the White Sea, the Caspian, and the Sea of Okhotsk: in the three latter, on account of their remoteness, and the little importance of their relations, the fleets are of course small, consisting only of a few frigates and brigs. The two chief fleets are stationed in the Baltic and the Black Sea, the latter increasing more and more with the increasing importance of the affairs of Turkey. Nearly 2000 cannon float on the Black Sea in twelve line-of-battle ships, eight frigates, and some smaller vessels. Among these ships is the largest in the Russian navy—the Warsaw, carrying 120 guns.

The Baltic fleet is still the most important; 28 ships of the line form the nucleus, to which is attached a suitable number of frigates, corvettes, &c. In

the number of ships and guns carried by them, this fleet has long been the most effective on the Baltic, and, indeed, doubles that of any other power there, both in number and equipment. The German powers, whose possessions border on the Baltic,—Prussia, Mecklenburg, and Holstein,—have no fleet there.\*

The Swedish fleet consists of 100 vessels of war; of which, ten are line-of-battle ships, and 13 frigates, with a fleet of about 300 sloops and gun-boats. The fleet of the guardians of the Sound, the Danes, that people of the island and the ship, consists at present of 30 large vessels,—among which are 6 line-of-battle ships, and 6 frigates,—and 70 gun-boats. If we estimate the naval force on the Baltic by ships of the line, there are 26 Russian, and only 16 not Russian. The Russian ships have now a coast line of 300 German miles to defend. Before Alexander's time they had only 170 miles, before Catherine's 120 miles, in the time of Peter the Great not more than 100, and previous to that, *i. e.*, 150 years ago, they did not possess a single foot of coast. The English have contributed largely towards this increase of Russian naval power in the North as well as in the South. The destruction of the Danish fleet at Copenhagen by the English was an occurrence at which the Russians might rejoice as reasonably as at the battle of Navarino.

The Russian fleet, formed entirely after English and Dutch models, has nothing nationally characteristic. The technical terms are consequently Dutch or English, as those of the army are German. To landsmen, every thing on board Russian vessels appears perfect and in the best order; even to those who saw them as Crawford did, there appears much that merits praise, but the learned in these matters find a great deal to find fault with, and many considerations induce them to undervalue the Russian navy, and think more lightly of its power. In the first place, the Russians are no sailors, but rather, as the English express it, regular land-lubbers. In this respect they are directly opposed to the English, Danes, Dutch, Greeks and other maritime powers, who prefer the sea service to any other. Of all the nations inhabiting modern Russia, hardly one is acquainted with, or accustomed to, the sea. The actual Russians, those in the heart of the country, have nothing to do with the sea, the dwellers on the coast are every where colonists and strangers. Even of the maritime population, few are familiar with the ocean. The Lettes in Courland and Livonia ever held the "yure" (sea) in great dread; the Tartars of the south have always been shepherds, obtaining their foreign produce from foreign maritime nations, and the Cossacks never issued, except at intervals, from the interior of the country, to make predatory excursions on the sea. The only exceptions are the Finns and Esthonians, who are esteemed good sailors; their long coast line, numerous lakes, and archipelagoes, affording much practice. Hence the Finlanders are very numerous in the Russian navy.

With the scarcity of native seamen, the Russians were compelled to apply to foreigners for sailors, as the French, who were bad horsemen,

\* Why, it would be difficult to say. Prussia has timber for ship-building in abundance, has a merchant navy which may stand in need of protection, and a line of coast on the Baltic, relatively of much greater importance than that of Russia; and yet Prussia does not maintain there a single ship of war. In time of war she must allow herself quietly to be cut off from the sea, while Russia had a naval force as soon as she possessed a foot of land on the seashore.



were obliged to have recourse to the Germans to mount their cavalry.\* Russia has always sought to allure foreigners into her fleet; at first, Venetians, Dutch, and Germans, at a late period English, and in the southern seas, Greeks. But these foreigners naturally rose to be heads and leaders, as they always do when serving with Russians; it was found impossible to keep them at the helm or the mast, where they were yet more necessary than in the higher posts. The wretched pay of the Russian mariner, which is not much higher than the soldier's, the severe discipline to which he is subjected, the contempt of foreigners for the lower class of Russians, and their consequent unwillingness to serve with them on equal terms, are circumstances which render a mingling of foreign and Russian sailors almost impossible. As the Russians did not become sailors through the natural effect of circumstances, or by their own will, but at the command of a master, there was nothing to be done but to select candidates for the sea, as they did for the land service, from the shepherds and husbandmen of the interior. Of the 30,000 sailors now serving in the Russian fleet, at least 24,000 have grown up at the plough and spade, and but 2000 or 3000 at the utmost have served any kind of apprenticeship on the Black Sea, or in the fishing trade on the northern and White seas, and on the great rivers of the country.

Apart from the incompetent service of a Russian ship-of-war, which is a necessary consequence of the circumstances just mentioned, the entire want of a merchant navy is most unfavourable for the fleet. A commercial marine is the *corps de reserve* for the war service; its national guard or yeomanry. England, Denmark, North America, and almost all maritime nations, have had an important trading marine, which could not only supply them with experienced seamen, but also with ships-of-war, by furnishing them with guns and issuing letters of marque. The naval commerce of Russia is almost entirely passive. If all the Russian vessels in all the Russian harbours were reckoned together, they would certainly fall far short of a thousand. In war, therefore, Russia could only reckon on the ships built expressly for the purpose; and while the army is surrounded even to superfluity with the very effective Cossacks and other light troops, the sea Cossacks, the privateers, are altogether wanting. From all these circumstances, it is clearly incorrect to oppose the mere numbers of the Russian ships of the line and frigates to those of other nations when their relative strength is in question. In this respect, Russia stands in the same relation to Denmark, France, and Spain, as these powers do to England, and England again to North America, which in a naval war would be formidable to its enemies by its immense merchant navy, and by no means from the number of its ships-of-war.

As on the other hand, the want of a commercial navy deprives Russia of its proper nursery for seamen, so on the other, from this very want the whole object of existence of a Russian fleet is different from that of others. It has no merchantmen to protect, nor distant colonies with which to keep up a communication. There are no convoys required; the snow and ice-fields that she possesses in North America, to which an expedition is made every three years, excepted, Russia has no colonies to visit, no commerce to protect in distant waters, against unexpected enemies or pirates.

The English, French, Dutch, and Danish fleets have constantly, even

\*To the natives of Alsace, Lorraine, &c. &c.

in the midst of a general peace, warlike business on their hands in distant parts of the globe; a blockade in America, an insult to their flag to avenge near Australia, pirates to chastise or slave-ships to take possession of. The Russian fleet has nothing but its yearly manœuvres on the Baltic and the Black Sea; hence the dexterity to be acquired by experience must be wanting. The fleets of other European powers have the whole ocean for their practice-field; the Russians have only two inland seas, nor even those in full measure, on account of the peculiar situation of the Russian harbours. Their climate is such that in the Baltic ports, in the White Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk, the fleets are compelled to remain inactive the greater part of the year. For six or eight months their vessels lie useless in their harbours; the time for practice in navigation is consequently very short, and the free disposal of their naval strength, in case of a war, much limited.

The relations of the southern ports of Astrakhan, Nikolayeff, Odessa, Kherson, and Sevastopol, in reference to climate, are little more favourable; so that for the greater part of the year, a Russian fleet may be looked upon as little better than an unavailable force, or a dead capital.

There is no other power in the world to which it is relatively so inordinately expensive to maintain a maritime force, notwithstanding the scanty pay of the seamen, nor any to whom it is relatively of so little advantage, as to Russia. Besides the above-mentioned causes for the excessive cost of the Russian navy, there are some peculiarities in the two chief ports which greatly tend to increase it; namely, the fresh water at Cronstadt, which makes the vessels decay rapidly; while in the salt water of Sevastopol there is a most pitiless foe, a small worm, which is rapidly and extensively destructive to ship-timber. It is asserted, that from these causes alone, the duration of a Russian ship is equal to only half that of a French or English vessel. If this last fact be correct, and it is admitted by a recent Russian traveller, who calls the worm, "*teredo navalis*," two things must be certain,—that the timbers of many Russian ships must be in a very unsound condition, and that their repairs must cost enormous sums. Undeniably, the great expense of Russia for her navy, other relations and circumstances considered, must be classed among the expenses of luxury. Taken at the minimum, the cost of repairs, equipment, &c., of 350 ships, the pay of the 50,000 sailors and marines, the maintenance of the harbours, twelve in number, of the seventeen hospital-stations for the fleet, and of the schools and institutions connected with the sea at St. Petersburg, Cronstadt, Nikolayeff, Arkhangel, Kherson, and Odessa, must amount to a yearly sum of sixty millions of rubles. Within the last eleven years, the gross amount cannot be much short of 700 millions; that is, it has swallowed up sixteen times the revenue of Poland, while some expeditions to North America, and the transport of some troops to Constantinople and the Caucasus, excepted, nothing has been gained by it. A fleet is scarcely necessary to Russia under her present relations, and must be maintained with a view to the future. Russia must be keeping her fleet in readiness to occupy better ports, when she gets them. When Russia is in possession of the Bosphorus and the Sound, her fleet will then become a necessity, will then obtain weight and significance in the state; at present it is nothing but a burden to the country, and perhaps the more dangerous to others on that very account, for Russia will make some effort to rid herself of her burden.

## CHAPTER XXV.

## MISCELLANEOUS NOTICES.

AMONG the first things which strike a traveller in St. Petersburg are a kind of small towers, seen here and there over the tops of the houses. They are not very high, though sufficiently so to command a view over the quarter to which they belong; round, and pierced with rows of small windows one above another, surrounded by a gallery, and surmounted by a multitude of iron rods and fastenings, the use of which is not very evident at first sight. These are the towers of the Siashes, or police stations, which serve as watch-towers against the two elements most formidable to St. Petersburg, fire and water. Day and night these galleries are paced by a couple of veterans wrapped in their sheepskins, who keep a vigilant look out upon their quarter. The iron poles belong to a telegraphic apparatus, intended to announce the approach or the occurrence of danger to the police and the public.

To announce danger from the water they have red flags; for danger from fire (in the day) globular balls of black striped leather, or sackcloth, and for fire by night, red-coloured lamps. Of every class of signs there are four pieces always at hand, which, arranged in various figures and constellations, indicate the quarter of the city threatened. Each part of the city has its peculiar figure. These four signs are amply sufficient for the twelve divisions of St. Petersburg, as they can be arranged in more than thirty different constellations, as thus:

0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0
0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0
0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0
0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0 0
0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0				

The flags are dreaded above all, for St. Petersburg knows its weak side to be that turned towards the sea. About fire they concern themselves



little; for if a St. Petersburger were to get out of bed for every fire, he would scarcely ever have a quiet night. "I went to my window one evening in my house on the English quay," said a friend of mine once to me, "and saw a great fire somewhere. Where is that fire?" I inquired of my servant. "Oh, some houses are on fire on the Viborg side!" "But there is another!" "That is the galley harbour in flames!" "And from a third window I saw a third fire!" "That is the Winter Palace," said my servant. There is hardly a public building or a quarter in St. Petersburg that has not been at some time or other a prey to the flames. The carelessness of the people, the many stoves which must be heated through the greater part of the year, the numerous lamps kept burning day and night before the pictures of saints,—and more than all, the immense quantity of wood used in building, are the causes of those frequent conflagrations. Petersburg has more wood, consequently more fires, than Berlin; Berlin more than Vienna, where stone is more in use. The Russian government is directing its attention to the transformation of St. Petersburg and other cities into stone; and this petrifying process has already made such progress in Moscow, that a second conflagration like that of 1812 would be impossible; if, therefore, another Napoleon came, he would be harder to drive out. The more Russia becomes civilized, the easier will she be to attack from the west.

#### STATISTICAL NOTICES.

The following details are selected from the journal of the minister of the interior:

The increase in the use of coals in St. Petersburg has kept pace with the increasing industry of the city. In the year 1822 St. Petersburg consumed but 8000 chaldrons, 10,000 in 1829, 13,700 in 1834, and in 1840, 20,000.

In St. Petersburg, which lies so far distant from its inland salt-mines, the greater part consumed in St. Petersburg is foreign salt, Norwegian, Portuguese, and German; 30,000 poods of native, to above 400,000 poods of foreign salt.

#### SUICIDES.

There are fewer suicides in St. Petersburg than in any capital in Europe. On an average, not 50 occur in a year; for every 10,000 in habitants, therefore, not more than one yearly lays violent hands on himself. Taking the average period of life at 35 years, not more than one out of 30 commits suicide.

#### ELEMENTS OF THE POPULATION.

No city in Europe contains so many nobles, so many serfs, and so many soldiers as St. Petersburg. Among its 500,000 inhabitants 50,000 are nobles, 110,000 serfs, and 70,000 soldiers. Therefore every tenth man in St. Petersburg is a noble, every fourth a serf, and every seventh a soldier.

The most important members of the population are of course the nobles

and the merchants. The division of the town property between these two classes is remarkable. If the whole were divided into 154 shares, the nobles would hold 63, and the merchants 70 shares. The number of merchants is estimated at 10,000; the nobles, as before said, at 50,000. Then on an average, every merchant has more than five times as much land in the city as the nobleman. Of course what the nobles possess without the city does not enter into this calculation. The above relation shows, however, plainly, of what importance the mercantile class is to the internal affairs of the capital. The class of artisans have only seven shares in the 154, and the foreigners, who, naturally, as much as possible, avoid purchasing, have only two shares.

The extent of ground covered by the city is about 81 square versts, or 20 millions of square *sashes*, reckoning  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet to the *sashe*. Of these 20 millions, 1,800,000 are occupied by houses; about 900,000 of stone, and as many of wood. All the rest, that is, more than nine-tenths of the ground, consists of fields, gardens, water, streets, courtyards, and open squares. The courts of the houses take up  $2\frac{1}{3}$  millions of square *sashes*. Every house in St. Petersburg has, therefore, on an average, a courtyard, somewhat larger than the house itself. The surface of the canals and rivers contains about one million *sashes*, that of the streets 1,600,000, the open places four millions. The streets and squares or places contain nearly six millions together, and would therefore require not less than a thousand millions of paving-stones to cover them, if we allow to every stone on an average half a square foot of surface. If a company of a hundred paviors were therefore constantly at work, holidays excepted, and if every man could lay down 150 stones a-day, they would have employment for 200 years, to pave every public place. As St. Petersburg has been scarcely a hundred years in existence, it is no great wonder that it is not all paved.

The churchyards cover an extent of 124,000 square *sashes*, the gardens  $5\frac{1}{2}$  millions, the fields enclosed in the city,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  millions. The three Admiralty divisions occupy a surface of two millions of square *sashes*, or one-tenth of the whole territory of the city. If this be compared with the data before given of the value of the immovable property in the different parts of the city, it will be seen that these three Admiralty divisions, or one-tenth of the superficial extent, possess  $1\frac{1}{2}$  more immovable value than the other nine-tenths, or that a given space within the Admiralty divisions is worth twelve times as much as the same space elsewhere.

#### MOVEMENT OF THE POPULATION.

At the death of Peter the Great, Petersburg had 75,000 inhabitants, in 1840, 500,000. In 115 years, therefore, the population has increased six-fold. On an average it has doubled every 40 years. If it continue to increase at the same rate, in 1900 it will amount to more than a million, and approach that of London. The rate of increase has not, however, been constantly the same. Under Catherine the Second it was slow; in the latter half of the last century, very rapid. The greatest impulse seems to have been given in the first quarter of the present century. From 1800 to 1830, it rose from 220,000 to 450,000. The destruction of Moscow probably contributed in part to this remarkable increase.

## NUMBER OF CHURCHES.

If Moscow, on account of its 1000 churches, is called "the Holy," Petersburg may be, and perhaps in secret is, called the Unholy, on account of its want of them. St. Petersburg at the utmost has 51 churches,\* only 34 of which are of the orthodox Russian Greek church. In the interior of Russia there are many towns of not more than 30,000 inhabitants, which contain as many churches and cloisters as the capital with its half-million. Among the seventeen non-orthodox, are nine Lutheran, one English, one Dutch, one Finnish, one Swedish, and the rest are German. Among the non-Lutheran churches, are Herrnhuters, Armenian, and Catholic churches. The great Catholic church is called simply the Polish, because the greater part of those who attend it are of that nation.

## THE RÄSHTSHIKS.

A peculiar kind of artisans in St. Petersburg, and indeed in all Russian cities, are the sculptors in wood, or Räshtshiks. It was to be expected that among the inhabitants of the immeasurable forests of Russia, a peculiar dexterity in wood-carving would develop itself. Many household utensils which with us are formed of clay or iron, are carved out of wood in Russia; such as pots, jugs, water-pitchers, &c., and many parts of the harness of a cart. For these things there are different places in Russia which supply them in large quantities; the Räshtshiks† in the towns, work, generally, at the ornamental part of the interior of churches, and make frames for the pictures of saints, for which an enormous quantity of wood-carving is wanted.

While in every other kind of mechanical labour the Germans far surpass the Russians, and are so numerous in St. Petersburg that the native workmen cannot be compared to them, the Räshtshiks are almost all Russians.

I visited Mr. Popugayeff, a well-known Räshtshik, to examine his stock and workshop. Mr. Popugayeff was a long-bearded old Russian, who wore his caftan exactly as his forefathers learnt of the Monguls to wear it 500 years ago. When he saw that I was a German, he recommended me to his son, a young man of twenty, who undertook to explain every thing to me. The young gentleman wore a frock-coat, and his hair *à la jeune France*, and spoke French and German. As both the antique father and the modern son were alike interesting to me, I requested them both to remain, which they willingly did. The father stroked his long beard, and related how he had come a poor "mushik" to St. Petersburg, and had risen from the humblest beginnings; the son settled his silken

\* Reimer gave 65, in 1810, and has enumerated them by name; but he has included in this number, all the chapels in the imperial palaces, barracks, hospitals, &c. The newest "Guide to St. Petersburg," by De Schellenburg, reckons 147 churches and chapels. This great difference in numbers arises from the circumstance that almost every public institution and school in St. Petersburg has its own chapel, and these are here all reckoned as churches.

† The word Rashtshik comes from *räsaty*, to cut, and means literally a cutter. The Russians *understand* wood, as we do cloth or clothes, when we say cutter—cloth or clothes cutter—(Tuch or Kleider Schneider).



cravat, and informed me that they had forty workmen in their pay, and their establishment was the first in St. Petersburg. The father showed me the vine and flower wreaths that he was carving in wood for the decoration of a church; the son interrupted him to show me a Venus and a Hercules, bespoken by some ambassador or other; the father pointed to a pair of gigantic "podsvetshniks" (church lamps), for the new Smolnoi church, and the son to a couple of elegant candelabras after Italian models, and some garlands for Rococo sofas, now in fashion in St. Petersburg. Both were equally zealous in their assurances that their "institution" was the first of its kind in the city, that it was known to the emperor, and that he had conferred on them a medal of honour some years before.

The drawings which the carvers made use of were very fair ones, and their dexterity in forming the whole figure, from such flat pictures, really wonderful. Each of the workmen had a drawing before him and worked upon the block of wood with chisel, knife, and hammer. Among the pieces of work executed by the workmen in their leisure hours, were some extremely beautiful; for example, a bouquet of flowers of the most delicate kind, and ears of corn, with the beard most minutely fine; on one leaf a caterpillar was crawling, on another was perched a fly and a butterfly; all, even to the thread-like legs and feelers, cut in wood. The wood used is that of the lime-tree exclusively. Their gilding is altogether as bad as their carving is good. The rococo, which has been newly resuscitated from the archives of the cabinet-makers of the last century, has had, thanks to these Räshtshiks, a wonderful success in Russia, where all the world were giving orders for rococo furniture.

From Mr. Popugayeff (parrot's son), I went to Mr. Sakharieff (sugar-baker), and then to Mr. Pustünin (empty head), all Räshtshiks, and found every where the same arrangements; bearded fathers and Frenchified sons, gilded flower-wreaths and wooden statues. They all asserted their superiority in this branch of art to the Germans; but added there was one German, who could work as they did with the chisel and knife, and that was a Mr. K—. I visited Mr. K—, who admitted that the matter stood as the Russians had said, but that German gilding was much better, and there were many other "buts" besides. The chief demand for wood carving, he said, came from the Russian churches, where the natives had a double advantage; in the first place from their better acquaintance with the priests, and secondly from the thoughtlessness with which they undertook commissions, generally offered to him who undertook them on the lowest estimate. A German who meant to do his work as well as possible, and who, in case of having made too low an estimate, could not help himself by means of connexion and intrigue, could never undertake a commission so cheaply as the Russian, and consequently rarely obtained one.

I begged Mr. K— to illustrate this by an example. "Oh, there are examples enough," said he. "But very lately there was a quantity of wood-carving wanted for a newly-built church. I made my calculation very exactly according to the plan laid down, the time in which the work must be finished, &c., and found I could not do it under 12,000 rubles. A Russian offered to take the contract at 7000; it was given him, but he was not ready in time, and the consecration of the church had to be put off in consequence. Through the mediation of friends, not only the delay was excused, but he got the other 5000 rubles, under the pretence

that a greater quantity of work had been required than was agreed for, and that it could not possibly be done for the sum bargained for. The work has scarcely been finished two years, and the gilding is tarnished already."

Every thing in Russia is managed much in the same manner, and there are abundance of such stories of promise and non-performance.

#### THE RASNOSHTSHIKS (PEDLERS).

I know not whether it be the unquiet nomadic element mingled in the Russian blood, which does not allow any person or thing to be so stable and sedentary as in our more solid Germany, or whether it must be ascribed to the active spirit of speculation, which urges them to look on all sides for the best market for their wares; but it is certain that nowhere are there so many wandering merchants and artisans as in Russia. Perhaps the severity of the climate, which requires constant movement, has something to do with it. The enormous extent of the empire may also be a cause for this; for, in many instances, if the seller's did not go to the buyers, their wares would not be bought at all. The suppleness and address of the Russians, who can turn all things to account, and are never to be found at a loss, render easy to them much that would be impossible to a German.

The Russians call these wandering traders *Rasnoshthshiks*, or *Prominishlenniks*. For this kind of commerce every Russian has a decided talent, and adopts it more readily than any other. Peter the Great knew this well, when he advised the Jews not to come to Russia, where they would find their masters, in the art of bargaining. Among the hundred nations that obey the Russian sceptre, the native of Great Russia, properly so called, is exclusively the travelling merchant, or pedler, except in the Polish provinces, where the Jew is his rival.

As India has been conquered by English merchants, so has Siberia been conquered by the Russian pedlers, who, exploring by degrees these vast countries in the interest of their trade, not only first wound around them the bonds that were to unite them to Russia, but took up arms to assist in the incorporation. In the east and on the Persian frontier, in the south-west towards Moldavia and Walachia, and in the extreme north of Lapland, the active and far-reaching *Prominishlenniki*, are spinning the same threads.

The centre of Russian pedlery, as of all other peculiarly Russian enterprises, is Moscow. The great manufacturing chiefs of that city are connected with multitudes of *Rasnashtshiks*, who have a certain amount of credit with them. Thus furnished, the trader nails his saint's picture to his one-horse Telega, and sets out cheerfully to visit all parts of the known and the unknown world. Whole caravans of them are to be met with traversing the empire in every direction, with their carts decked out with saints' pictures and the herbs of the steppes. They cross the Black Sea to the Tartars, though these are but poor customers, pass the Caucasian chain, traverse Siberia, and seek gain at the very foot of the Chinese wall. Persia is not too hot for them, nor Kamschatka too cold, when the clink of the silver ruble is heard. If the market among the barbarians is not profitable, they hasten across the Lena, the Yenisei, and the Ob, to the Baltic and St. Petersburg. What they cannot get rid of there, they

carry among the "swamp people," as the Finns call themselves, and return at last to Moscow after two or three years absence, to pay their creditor, who, in the mean time, probably has never heard a syllable of them.

We western Europeans cleave to our rocks and mountains; but the pulses of Russian life beat on immeasurable plains around the whole circumference of the globe, for between the Russian American possessions and the islands of the icy sea, there remains but a small space to complete the circle. Whilst we Germans sometimes feel ourselves strange a few miles from our native soil, the Russian is at home every where in his vast native land, and it is all one to him whether he earn his bread under the parallel of Constantinople, or on the shores of the Polar sea. It would be a great mistake to suppose the numerous street population of the Russian cities all natives of the place. They come together from all parts of the north and south, to disperse again to the east and west.

In no city is this more the case than in St. Petersburg, in whose streets all the governments find representatives, and whither dealers and artisans of all kinds flock in multitudes.

In every household there are a multitude of breakable commodities standing in constant need of repair. In all Russian towns artisans of all kinds are roaming about to supply this constantly recurring necessity; which is the easier done, because their manual dexterity enables them to do nearly as much with a mere hatchet as can be accomplished elsewhere with hammer, plane, knife, and chisel. Wandering coopers, smiths, tailors, and shoemakers are ready at a call to hoop, hammer, and patch; even glaziers risk their fragile materials in the streets for the chance of a trifling profit.

The loudest scream is that of the flower-merchants, who carry their wares about in pots placed slantingly on a board upon their heads; dealers in singing-birds traverse the streets, hung with cages from head to foot; while others are perfectly laden with boots, stockings, and gloves. Almost every cry announces some branch of industry from distant parts of the mighty empire, whereas our street calls have reference only to the neighbourhood. "Sfapogi Kasanskiyi" (boots from Casan), "Kartini Moskovskiya" (pictures from Moscow), "Khalati Bukhorskiyi" (Tartar dressing-gowns). The Mongolians and Tartars are distinguished for their skill in the preparation of leather, and almost every branch of manufacture connected with this article in Russia has had its origin from them; as the gold and silver embroidered caps and girdles of Moscow; the richly-adorned morocco boots for morning wear of Casan, which are in use throughout Russia, and are also exported. Dressing-gowns are almost the only things that do not come through Russian hands, but from those of the Tartar makers. Their "khalati" are generally their only merchandise, and for them alone they come to St. Petersburg, where they are often called "dressing-gown Tartars." Certainly the Tartar, or Bokharian gowns, are the most perfect things of the kind. The price is moderate, the pattern of the silk extremely beautiful, the cut very elegant, and the colours lasting; they are of the few articles of dress that are always in fashion. The dressing-gown Tartars may be distinguished at a glance from the rest of the street population of St. Petersburg by their cleanliness of apparel, carefully trimmed beards, shorn heads, and serious anxious physiognomy.

None of the Rasnoshtshiks deal in a more current article than the picture-dealers of Moscow. The Russian delights to decorate his dwelling with all sorts of gaily-coloured pictures. The Kabaks (spirit-shops), the



sitting-rooms of the lower classes, the little cabins of the river barges, often even the inside of the sledges and kibitkis are plastered over with pictures, coloured paper, and patches of gay-looking carpet. The chief manufactory of these articles is Moscow, whence they issue to all parts of the empire. These pictures may be divided into three classes, religious, political, and æsthetic. The religious are the oldest, the most peculiarly Russian, and the most universally favoured. They represent all the scenes and subjects that constantly busy the fancy of a Russian,—Heaven with its happiness, Hell with its torments, the seven universal churches, with their hundred sacred cupolas and towers, the twelve most celebrated convents of Russia, all on one sheet; Moscow the Holy with its thousand churches; then the moral satiric pictures, such as the “gold devil” scattering money among the people, and dazzling and seducing all classes; the devil of love, and the devil of vanity, mocking and leading by the nose men and women of all ages; then the holy martyrs assisting the poor and sick, and bearing with patience the greatest torments in their own persons. All these objects are depicted with great liveliness of fancy and colouring, and in the greatest detail.

The political pictures all take for their subjects the beloved persons of their emperors, and illustrate a number of anecdotes relative to them. The Emperor Peter, when, on the lake of Ladoga, he seized the helm of the little vessel and called to the affrighted boatmen, “Courage, my brethren; did you ever hear of an emperor drowned in a puddle?” The Emperor Peter putting on the imperial crown; Alexander trying to restore to life the peasant found frozen to death in Lithuania; Nicholas wrapped in his simple mantle, in an ordinary Russian Troika (a carriage with three horses), in which he drives through his empire; or with his son Constantine on his lap, in a small boat with his consort; the heir to the imperial crown as he attends his father at a review. There is a positive cyclis of such scenes, as current as the stamped coin of the realm, and continually reappearing in the same form and manner, and making part and parcel of the national life.

The æsthetic pictures are mere imitations of foreign productions sent from Vienna, Paris, and Berlin, to Moscow, where they are immediately *translated* into Russian; that is quickly imitated, furnished with Russian inscriptions, and sold at a low price to the Rasnoshtshiks, who disperse them throughout the world. The pretty face of the Queen of England, and the beard of Louis Philippe, are thus made known on the other side of the Caucasus. Napoleon’s portrait is as common as among us, and all the remarkable events connected with that mighty apparition are variously presented in these pictures to the Russian people.

#### DRESS OF THE COURT LADIES.

Since the Emperor Nicholas has introduced the old Russian costume for ladies at his court (the gentlemen keep their uniforms), there is no other court in the world that presents so splendid an appearance on gala days. The chief garment is the Sarafan, a wide open robe without sleeves; underneath is worn a full long-sleeved gown. The sarafan itself is generally made of velvet richly embroidered with gold, of different colours, and varying in the embroidery according to the rank of the lady. The under dress

s lighter in colour, generally of silk, and the long sleeves clasped at the wrist with gold bands. The hair is braided smooth, and adorned with the Kokoshnik, a kind of diadem, crescent-shaped, with the points turned towards the back. This kokoshnik, richly set with pearls and precious stones, and from the back of which descends a long veil, gives every lady the air of a queen.

The directions with respect to form and colour of these robes are very exact, but enough is still left free to be varied by the taste of the wearer. The maids of honour are distinguished by their head-dress. The whole has at once the imposing effect of uniformity with the interest of variety.

The court of Vienna lays claim to a more solid magnificence in its courtiers and magnates. This may be true, but with respect to outward appearance, splendour of colour, and tasteful arrangement of forms, no court can be compared with that of St. Petersburg. And with respect to manners, if we are to suppose the well-known prescriptions of Catherine for the demeanour of her courtiers at the Hermitage to have been seriously meant, the court must have undergone an extraordinary change; the Russian courtiers now find as much to ridicule in other courts, as others formerly found in theirs.

#### NUMBER OF HORSES IN AN EQUIPAGE.

The imperial state equipage has six horses, although the emperor, when alone, frequently drives only one. The nobles down to a certain rank drive four; but merchants, tradesmen, and all not noble are restricted to two horses. Twice only are they allowed the pleasure of driving in a four-horsed carriage; on their wedding-day, and at their funeral.

#### CONSECRATION OF A HOUSE.

I was one day passing a window round which many persons were crowding, and found that the house, which belonged to an obacconist, was to be consecrated. As I knew something of the owner, I entered the doorway, and was immediately invited to enter and "assist" at the ceremony. He had had his business in another street, and was now removing and extending it. All was as bright as new silver in his establishment; the counters and sofas were of highly-polished mahogany; the beds in the further chambers made up and decorated, but as yet unslept in; in the front shop, parcels of tobacco, chests of cigars, and other wares, were arranged in the best order; the weights and scales were all ready and as bright as gold; but not an ounce of any thing had yet been sold.

A large party of guests in gala dresses filled the rooms; some friends and relations of the merchant, bowing and crossing themselves, marched after a party of priests in full pontificalibus. Every tobacco-box and cigar-chest, every divan, table, and chair, every corner, doorway, wall, and window, was visited, blessed and sprinkled, the officiating priests singing and swinging the censers all the time. The whole ended with a feast; and the merriment was still going on at the back of the house, when the business began in the front, while the blessing was yet warm and fresh.

## BRULOFF'S PICTURE OF POMPEII.

The most celebrated artists of the St. Petersburg academy are Brülöff, Orlovsky, and Tolstoy. I saw several of their works, and can affirm that they deserve their reputation.

Orlovsky has devoted himself to cabinet paintings, the subjects from Russian life, which will long continue to afford abundant materials where the artist knows how to choose them. Orlovsky, the Russian Horace Vernet, is particularly famous for his horses, which he has studied in the Steppes. One of his best, and best-known pictures is his "Courier." A Russian troika is carried on at full speed by three wild horses. The animals themselves are all fire and spirit from nostril to the extremity of every hair; the carriage rushes on over stock and stone through a whirlwind of dust; the bearded courier sits upright as a dart upon his seat firmly grasping the reins, and securely guiding the steeds, who fly onwards as if borne on the wings of the wind.

Tolstoy is known as a sculptor; his subjects modelled in wax are executed with the greatest precision and taste. The campaign of 1812 has been illustrated by him in a series of bas-reliefs.

Brülöff is the most celebrated of the three, yet he has only produced one absolutely original picture, the "Destruction of Pompeii." This celebrated piece hangs in a room by itself in the Academy of Arts. It is not alone the only important work of the painter, but the only production of the Russian school known in foreign countries. A circumstantial criticism of this picture would lead us too far, even if I were competent to the task; it will be enough to give a description of the subject, the idea of the artist, and of the grouping of the whole. When the picture was at Rome, these were all well known; but placed as it is, so far out of the track of ordinary travellers, it may be somewhat forgotten.

The foreground is a street of Pompeii. The two lines of houses are lost in the distance as far as the gates of the city, before which the fiery stream of lava is advancing. Veiled in clouds and smoke the labouring mountain, the cause of the calamity, sends forth its fierce red light through night and vapour. The blackest midnight covers the face of heaven; only the forked lightning, issuing from its destruction-swollen womb, brightens for a moment the scene in the streets below. In the centre lies a woman struck dead by the lightning, and still in the last agony clasping her infant son. The child, unconscious of the horrors around, stretches playfully after the glowing ashes on the ground. On the right-hand totters an old gray-headed man, whom a younger one and a boy are trying to carry away; and further off is seen a bridegroom, surrounded by the fear-stricken bridal guests, and endeavouring to save his flower-crowned bride. The fond pair believed they had attained the summit of their wishes, and death overtakes them on the sweetest festival of their lives!

To the left is the principal group, the imbodiment, probably, of the dominant idea of the picture,—an allusion to Christianity triumphant over the gods of the heathen. From the fallen temple rush forth the priests in white garments, laden with the sacred vessels and the powerless gods, whose aid they invoke in vain. Fear and anguish are painted in the strongest colours on their features, illumined by the lightning. Out of a subter-



anean church or crypt (the Christian faith may well have insinuated itself at that time into Pompeii) a Christian priest comes forth, a disciple of the Apostles. He is contemplating earnestly but without dread, the passing scene in the heavens and on the earth, and appears to console and encourage some poorly-clad persons clinging by his side in fervent prayer. The dress of the priest and his censer point him out as of the Greek confession—a homage to the national church as well as to Christianity. In the distance are seen many objects of terror, families flying from the falling houses, horses wild with terror, &c. An effect particularly striking is produced by the marble statues shaken by the earthquake from their places on the roof, as if, like so many "stone guests," they were descending of their own accord. Glared on by the lightning, and their outlines sharply defined against the blackened skies, they hover obliquely in the air, about to fall, crushing and crushed, upon the bride, the priests, the children, and the old men. Besides the chief figures there are many accessories to the effect; as, for instance, a young rider upon a frightened and rearing horse. The youth is ghastly pale, held in the saddle by his convulsive grasp of the steed: he is already lifeless, and the horse is galloping away with a dead rider. A number of rich ornaments and precious stones have fallen from a slave in the street: all this splendour, all this life will soon be covered with night and horror, and centuries must pass away before the ashes of that bride are brought to the light of day.

Leaving it to better critics to praise or blame the technical details of the picture, I will only remark that it is undoubtedly one of the best productions of a modern pencil, and that it is much to be lamented that the artist should so soon have abandoned the creative soil of Italy for voluptuous St. Petersburg, whose muse is idleness, and in the stream of whose pleasure-seeking life all productive genius is so quickly crippled. Brülloff is now putting on canvass the pretty faces of the court ladies and the gay uniforms of the Russian generals; and thus an original genius is degraded into a mere copyist.

This picture excepted, there is little else worth seeing in the Academy of Arts (*Akademïa Khudoyestve*) for the artist or the connoisseur; but for the ethnograph and the traveller, who are interested in seeing all things from their own point of view, and as productions of their political and moral relations, there is enough that is instructive.

The best among the works there displayed are the cartoons of Rafael Mengs; an Apollo and Muses; and the Muse of History listening in a Temple of Fame, and recording past events in a book. Among the three hundred pictures purchased in Italy for the Academy there are some good ones, including a few Raffaelles and Peruginos. The statues that Admiral Spiridion collected among the islands of the Archipelago, are mere fragments. Some statues brought from Warsaw are not without value. Here again are to be seen the busts of Peter the Great and Catherine the Second, two earthly sovereigns whose countenances are as often met with in Russia as those of the two spiritual kings, Schiller and Göthe, are among us in Germany. In the midst of the wrecks of the old Greek world, Polish trophies, and the portraits of the czars, are also seen the features of the greatest general of our time, Napoleon, of whom a fine marble statue was carried away from the good city of Hamburg by Bennigsen and Wittgenstein, who transported it to St. Petersburg.

The building itself is one of the finest in the city, and, indeed, one of the

finest as well as the largest temples of art in the world. It stands on Vassili Ostroff, on the Neva; a magnificent quay, whose granite blocks and noble steps form the pedestal and avenue of the temple, supports also the guardians of its gate, two superb Egyptian sphinxes, fitly placed. Indeed all the colossal productions of Egyptian architecture would seem fitly placed in colossal St. Petersburg. The building is of the finest proportions, and has an elevation of 70 feet, with a circumference of 250 toises; the whole length, 400 feet along the Neva façade, is adorned with columns and pilasters. On the centre cupola a colossal Minerva is seated, and the portal is borne by a Farnese Hercules and a Flora.

The building is so extensive, that not only the 300 pupils who here receive instruction, but the professors and academicians, and many artists, not less it is said than a thousand persons, live there. It also contains some other collections of antique sculpture, Italian paintings, and some by the pupils; but compared with the collections of Berlin, Dresden, and Vienna, they are insignificant.

#### RIVER SHIPPING.

The little St. Petersburg gondolas that navigate the Neva have a broad and low prow, and a high-pointed stern. A more important class of vessels than the gondolas are the great *struse* fleets which come to St. Petersburg in summer from the interior. There are among them, Volga, Kama, Ladoga, Dwina, and Volchoff ships, with which rivers, owing to an extensive system of canals, St. Petersburg is in constant intercourse.

The peculiar build of all these vessels, which pass under the general name of *struse* is this: they are enormously large, and so little labour is wasted on their construction, that they look more like productions of nature than of art. The basis of them is the large trunk of the pine, of which the strongest side branches are left, and serve as ribs to the boat. The planks that cover those ribs, are smoothed merely with the hatchet, and made fast with strong wooden pegs. The lading is covered with a roof formed of a young birch-tree, on which all the branches are left, and over this a tarpawling is sometimes thrown. Round the edge of this roof a kind of gallery runs for the convenience of the crew. The cabin of the master, made of planks roughly nailed together, and decorated with pieces of gaudy carpet and pictures of saints, is placed in the middle of the ship, dividing it thus into two parts. A pine-stem forms the mast, and supports an enormous sail, and two other pine-stems placed fore and aft are the rudders, which are generally longer than the mast. That at the prow is often grotesquely painted in all colours, with long stripes, crosses, and stars, like the hem of Iris's garment, or the tail of a peacock; and by the arrangement of these colours it is that the birthplace of the bark is known.

The *struses* arrive by hundreds and thousands every summer: the fleets or caravans, as the Russians call them, have each their appointed time for leaving their places of rendezvous in the interior; the "salt caravan" at one time, the "iron caravan" at another; the greater part remain at St. Petersburg. Not more than six or eight hundred return with a cargo, the others are broken up for fuel; many get frozen in before they are broken up, and in the course of the winter are gradually stripped of

their planks, leaving their skeleton sides erect amid the snow and ice on the banks of the Neva.

## PICKPOCKETS.

The French ambassador was one day vaunting the dexterity of the Parisian thieves to one of the grand-dukes, and related many anecdotes of their address. The grand-duke was of opinion that the St. Petersburg thieves were quite their equals; and offered to lay a wager, that if the ambassador would dine with him the next day, he would cause his excellency's watch, signet-ring, or any other articles of his dress which he thought most secure, to be stolen from him before the dessert was over. The ambassador accepted the wager, and the grand-duke sent immediately to the chief of the police, desiring him to send the adroitest thief he might happen to have in custody at the time. The man was dressed in livery, instructed what to do, and promised a pardon if he accomplished his task well. The ambassador had named his watch as the particular object of attention, both for himself and the thief; when he had got the watch, the supposed servant was to give the grand-duke a sign.

The dinner began, the preliminary whet, the soups and the rôti came and disappeared in their turns; the red, white, Greek, Spanish, and French wines sparkled successively in the glasses of the guests. The ambassador kept close guard on his watch, and the grand-duke, observing his earnest anxiety, smiled with good-humoured archness. The pretended lackey was busily assisting in the removal of the dishes, the dinner was nearly over, and the prince awaited with impatience the expected signal. Suddenly his countenance brightened; he turned to the ambassador who was deep in conversation with his neighbour, and asked him what was the hour. His excellency triumphantly put his hand to his pocket, he had had it on his watch a few moments before—and to the amusement of all, but particularly of the grand-duke, drew out a very neatly cut turnip! A general laugh followed. The ambassador, somewhat embarrassed, would take a pinch of snuff, and felt in all his pockets for his gold snuffbox—it was gone! The laughter became louder; the ambassador in his embarrassment and vexation had recourse to his seal ring, to turn it as he was accustomed—it was gone! in short he found that he had been regularly plundered of every thing but what had been fastened on him by the tailor and the shoemaker—of ring, watch, snuff box, handkerchief, toothpick and gloves. The adroit rogue was brought before him, and commanded by the grand-duke to give back the stolen property; when, to the great surprise of the prince, the pickpocket took out *two* watches, and presented one to the ambassador, and one to his imperial highness; two rings, one for the ambassador, and one for the grand-duke, two snuffboxes, &c. In astonishment, his highness now felt in his pockets as the ambassador had done, and found that he too had been stripped of his moveables in a like manner. The grand-duke solemnly assured the ambassador that he had been quite unconscious of the theft, and was disposed at first to be angry with the too dexterous artist. However, upon second thoughts, the fellow, who had enabled him to win his wager so triumphantly, was dismissed with a present, and a warning to employ his talents in future to more useful purposes.



## OFFICE FOR FOREIGNERS.

In the first few days of my stay in St. Petersburg, I had occasion to visit the Alien-office several times. It is, undeniably, one of the most interesting offices in the city. Its destination is inscribed upon its brow in four different languages. The officers are exceedingly polite, and generally address you in your native language. In the antechamber, persons are stationed to take the cloak or furred coat, and give tickets in exchange as at a club. The halls of audience are large and airy, as they are in all public offices in Russia, whose roomy buildings bear the same relation to our murky dens, in point of size, as the Russian empire does to our kingdoms.

As every foreigner must present himself in person to obtain and renew his certificate of permission to reside, a very interesting society is generally to be found here, and one has an opportunity of becoming acquainted with every stranger in St. Petersburg. Here sit the English grumbling and cursing more than all at the countless inquiries of the Russian police; Germans who take it more patiently, and give contentedly the required guarantees, certificates, and signatures; governesses answering the many questions put to them in fear and trembling; old ladies who, in their eightieth year, must talk about their birth, and say when and where, and how they came into this world; merchants, the quietest and most loyal people in the world, and intent only on getting money, and yet who are required to give security for their political sentiments; honest German artisans questioned and cross-questioned like suspected criminals; but all, as I said before, in the politest manner possible. It is to be remarked also, that every thing issuing from these officials has the smoothest exterior. Paper, writing, sealing, typographical arrangement, and even the style of the passports, permissions to reside, certificates, and testimonials, which the Russian authorities issue, are better and more tasteful in appearance than with us. Ours smack of the dismal locality whence they emanate, and still bear the stamp of the middle ages; in Russia all these things are in the newest fashion.

## IRON ROOFS.

Among the various architectural superiorities in which the cities of Russia rejoice, may be enumerated the manner in which their roofs bid defiance to Jupiter Pluvius. Till very lately Russia, like Germany, was sheltered under thatch, tiles, and slates, but since whole mountains of iron have been discovered on the estates of the Demidoffs, and the Jakovleffs, this metal is used more and more as a shield against the attacks of rain and hail. The manner of construction is this. Large plates of iron are laid upon the rafters, lapping over each other, and soldered together at the edges. On the sides of the rafters they are made fast, but nowhere else: in other respects, the whole roof rests loosely upon the house. Holes pierced for nails are found to diminish the durability. These roofs are commonly painted green. As a frequent renewal of this paint is necessary to the preservation of the roof, they have usually a bright and new appearance. These iron roofs last more than twice as long as tiles, and do not cost twice as much (the duration of one is reckoned at 20, the other at

50 years). The iron-roofs, moreover, are lighter than any other. In case of fire, however, they are more dangerous, as they heat sooner, and are more difficult to remove. All the Russian iron roofs are inclined at a very slight angle, and indeed look almost flat like the Italian roofs. In summer, moreover, they are as hot as the piombi of Venice, and in winter as cold as an ice cave among the glaciers; yet in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, and all the chief cities of European Russia, except the Polish and German cities, and even in the new towns of Siberia, the greater part of the better houses (those belonging to the government always) are provided with these convenient, elegant, flat, green roofs.

#### THE FATHER OF THE RUSSIAN FLEET.

The little boat which Peter the Great assisted to build with his own hands for the purpose of navigating the Neva during the building of St. Petersburg and of his larger vessels; that little reed first cast by him upon the waters of the Baltic, which has since made so usurious a return, this Father of the Russian Fleet, as it is called in St. Petersburg, lies in the fortress under a small hut. It is well done of the Russians to honour and preserve it; well done, that when it is brought from its abiding-place, it should be saluted by the thunder of the whole fleet, as when a prince shows himself to his people; but it is very ill done to paint, renew, and furbish up this relic as they do. They have planed and whitened away the old soil left by Peter's hands, they have removed the old copper that Peter himself nailed on, and put some that is bright and clean in its place; there is nothing dusty or old-looking about it.

If it were impossible to leave it as we do an old flag, quite untouched, because it was desirable to keep it water-tight, the sails, flags, and tackle, that Peter had himself so often worked, might have been patched, but all this has been put aside, and every thing made spick and span new. Why do they not also give orders to scrape, turn, and polish the bones of the martyrs in the churches. In matters of faith or superstition, the Russians adhere to what is old, but not so by an historical idea.

The vessel is thirty feet long, eight feet broad, and can spread three sails. In the stern of the vessel is an image carved in wood, representing a long-bearded Russian pope stretching out his hand over the sea, blessing and consecrating it, that it may bear the Russian fleet, typified in some rude carvings of ships leaving the harbour.

Close to the "Father of the Fleet" stands the Grandmother of the houses of St. Petersburg, the small wooden cottage which Peter built for himself by the Neva, till a more splendid dwelling could be erected. It is twenty feet high, forty long, the inner walls covered with canvass, and stands opposite the summer and winter palaces.

#### VAPOUR-BATHS.

On Saturday evening an unusual movement may be seen among the lower classes in St. Petersburg. Whole companies of poor soldiers who have got a temporary furlough, troops of mechanics and labourers, whole families, men, women, and children, are eagerly traversing the streets

with towels under their arms, and birch-twigs in their hands. From the zeal and haste manifested in their movements, they would seem to be engaged on important business, as in fact they are, the most important and agreeable of the whole week. They are going to the public baths, to forget, in the enjoyment of its vapours, the sufferings of the past week, to make supple the limbs stiffened with past toil, and invigorate them for that which is to come. The Russians are such lovers of vapour-baths, that Petersburg contains an immense number of these establishments. Those for the poor are mostly in the suburbs. Before the door, the words "entrance to the baths" in large letters, invites the eye; within the doorway, so narrow that only one at a time can work his way in, sits the money-taker, who exchanges a ticket for the bath for a few copeks, and has generally a whole sackful of large copper coin by his side. Near him sit a couple of women selling "schnaps" and kalatshi, while the people are thronging in and out as at a theatre. The Plotniks who make a holiday at an earlier hour on Saturday that they may not lose their bath; the servants and coachmen who have been lucky enough to get leave from their masters; the poor worried soldier, to whom this joy is sweeter than to all, because it falls so seldom to his share; men, women, boys, girls, all hurry to secure their tickets as if they were proceeding to some favourite show.

Let us also take one, and follow them, to see what is going on. In general the passage is divided into two parts behind the check-taker's post, one for the male and one for the female guests. In the bathing-houses for the peasants in the country, the bath is often in common for both sexes, and some travellers maintain that the same thing takes place in St. Petersburg. I can only say I have visited many, and always found the baths for the sexes divided from one another.

We first enter an open space in which a number of men are sitting in a state of nudity on benches, all dripping with water and perspiration, and as red as lobsters, breathing deep, sighing, puffing, and gossiping, and busily employed in drying themselves and dressing. These have already bathed, and now in a glow of pleasurable excitement, are puffing and blowing like Tritons in the sea. Even in the winter I have seen these people all melting from the hot bath, drying and dressing in the open air, or at most in a sort of booth, forming an outhouse to the baths. Round it are the doors leading to the bathing-rooms, large wooden apartments, in which a heat of 40° to 50° (Reaumur) is maintained. A thick cloud of vapour conceals at first what is going on within; for nothing is at first visible but the feeble glimmer of the lamps, breaking through a thick atmosphere, and the flame of the heated ovens. To remain here clothed is evidently impossible, neither would it be advisable for a well-dressed person to risk an appearance here as a mere spectator. I entered therefore in the costume of Nature, in which we are as much alike as one egg is like another. In any other costume the naked people would infallibly have ejected me speedily. Under this disguise I pursued my observations unmolested, the bath being by no means my object.

When the door is opened, as before observed, no object is at first visible. The vapour is raised by the entrance of the cold air with the new comer, which makes that visible, which existing before in a half gaseous state, was nearly transparent. In winter one must enter like Jupiter to Semele, in clouds and tempest; the cold atmosphere brought by the new comer, freezing the vapour within, and causing it to descend in flakes of snow.



The sensation at first is very singular. There are a number of persons, from fifty to a hundred, employed, apparently, in the most extraordinary manner in the world, namely, in inflicting torture on themselves. On the platforms, raised in the form of an amphitheatre, lie a number of bodies on their backs or stomachs; if not dead, they certainly seem struggling with death; for the air they are breathing can only serve to stifle. Other persons, their tormentors, are employed in scourging them with birchen rods, steeped in cold water, as if to increase the smart. Here and there a father is holding his little boy between his knees, and diligently employed in flogging him. Others are standing by the glowing stoves, as if they wished to be roasted, and others again, descending from the upper platforms, steaming at every pore, have ice-cold water poured over them by the painful, of which there are tanks at hand for the purpose.

A man may fancy himself entering a place of penance, and take the people, if not for victims of persecution, as they seem willing sufferers, at least for martyrs to some fixed idea, or some fanatical extravagance. But what will a stranger think when he questions the men, and hears them all protest they are delighted with their discipline, and as comfortable as fish in water?

Any one, however, who can overcome the first impression, who can accustom his lungs to swallow fire, and will place himself upon a bench, and yield to the languor inevitably resulting from inordinate perspiration, will soon be enabled to solve the enigma. In the baths I am describing, I did not experience this enjoyment, for they were too disgusting to tempt me to join in the delights of the place; but in the more elegant establishments of which there are many in St. Petersburg, and where every thing, antechamber, dressing-rooms, and baths are perfect in their kind, I have often experienced it. The pleasurable sensation is felt when the first disagreeable effect of the heat is overcome, and the transpiration commences in full activity. Then the beneficent spirit of warmth pervades the whole frame, a divine sense of pleasure is all that remains to us of our existence, our whole being seems dissolved in fleeting vapour; all pain, all stiffness vanishes from the limbs, we feel light and buoyant as feathers. The rubbing and flogging with birchen twigs increases the transpiration, and consequently the enjoyment. All bodily pain, be it what it may, disappears in these baths; of headach, toothach, cramps, convulsion in the limbs or face, gout and rheumatism, not a trace remains. It is an extraordinary excitement, a kind of intoxication of the whole nervous system. Of course it is not asserted that the Russian baths are a radical cure for all these disorders, for many pains return with increased violence afterwards; but it is certain, that while in the bath, and for some hours afterwards, every person feels himself totally free from suffering, and hence we may easily comprehend the extraordinary fondness of the Russians for this kind of intoxication. By one of these baths a man is washed out like a sponge; not only the skin is washed, but the heart, stomach, liver and lungs, seem cleansed by the torrent of evaporation. For a sensual people, I can imagine no higher enjoyment. The Russians of all ranks and ages are so accustomed to the use of these baths, that they feel unwell when obliged to dispense with them for any length of time; and the poor soldier, fettered by the severity of discipline, will complain that he has not been able to enjoy the bath for a month, with as compassion

asking an air, as if he had undergone the pangs of hunger for as long a period.

#### A RUSSIAN OPINION OF THE ITALIAN WINTER.

How much the Russians love their vigorous, hearty, characteristic winter, has been already shown in the fact, that even in their Paradise they have not forgotten snow. I once saw a letter from a Russian servant who had accompanied his master's family to Italy, and wrote to his brother from Rome, thus: "My dear Ivan, I am writing to you from Rome, which we have reached in the middle of the winter. But what a winter! Nobody thinks of sledges. I don't know when or how the poor people are to bring their corn and brandy into the city. It is not so cold here as with us, but I feel a great deal colder; for the people have the most miserable little stoves, and no double doors and windows. Ah, my dear Ivan, how I envy you your comfortable stoves, and your furs. I have done a very stupid thing in leaving my furs behind me. I could have shown these people, who know nothing about it, how to dress for the winter! January is almost over, and they have brought in no ice yet, and they say they have no ice-cellars; but I can't believe it, for then every thing must spoil in summer. Ah how I long for *our* winter and *our* stoves. Dear Ivan, put up a wax-candle to St. Vladimir, and pray to him to send these poor people snow and good stoves, and sledges, and all the comfortable things *we* have in Russia. They may have a good summer, but their winter is horrible."

#### COFFEE-HOUSES.

The coffee-houses of St. Petersburg are of small importance. When a man is sure of being received by his friends, morning, noon, and night, in the most obliging way in the world, he has little inclination to visit coffee-houses, where he must pay for every thing, and after all, is never so comfortable as in the house of a wealthy friend. So long as the inhabitants of St. Petersburg are so extremely hospitable, the taverns and coffee-houses are not likely to prosper greatly. In Paris and London there are people enough who spend half their time in such places; in St. Petersburg they are frequented only by unconnected foreigners, or by officers perhaps who give each other the rendezvous there. They meet there to go afterwards together to the house of a mutual friend, and consume only as much as a sense of propriety obliges them to consume; or they run in before dinner, to read the papers, and collect as much news as they can for their dinner party. Even this trifling want has been enough in St. Petersburg to call into life some very elegant establishments. The most celebrated is Beranger's, who has several shops for the sale of confectionary in the principal streets of the capital. His headquarters are in the Prospekt. Compared to the Parisian houses, however, they are small and lifeless, but furnished with taste and elegance, and provided with the best English, French, and German newspapers.

## BOLSHOI PROSPEKT.

One of the most peculiar and handsomest streets in St. Petersburg is the Bolshoi Prospekt on Vassili Ostroff. It is very wide, and has gardens in front of all the houses on either side. The houses, tenanted mostly by German professors, academicians, and merchants, and by some Russians, are agreeably hidden behind the trees of the gardens. In the midst runs the broad road for carriages and equestrians, and an elevated trottoir of wood for the pedestrians. A footpath through the garden leads to the house door, but the principal entrance is in the courtyard, round which the dwelling-house is built, and at every second garden is a drive for carriages to enter the said courtyard. In turning off from the main street into one of these courtyards we might fancy ourselves entering a detached farm-house, or a nobleman's seat. This peculiar and pretty arrangement is owing to the manner in which the street was first laid out by Peter the Great. He had made broad canals on each side; but as in time these canals were found inconvenient, they were filled up, and gardens planted in their stead.



# MOSCOW.

## PLAN, STYLE OF BUILDING, STREETS.

THE assertion sometimes made, that no city is so irregularly built as Moscow, is in some respects true. None of the streets are straight; houses, large and small, private dwellings, public buildings, and churches are mingled confusedly together; but when, instead of looking at it in detail, we consider it as a whole, it must be admitted that few cities are more regularly or more rationally built than Moscow.

The original founders settled without doubt on the Kremlin hill, which naturally became the centre of the city at a later period. Nearest that fortified hill lay the Kitai Gorod (Chinese city), the oldest part of Moscow. Around both the Kremlin and Kitai Gorod, lies Beloi Gorod (white city), which is encircled by the Tver Boulevard, and the other Boulevards, forming together one street. Round Beloi Gorod runs, in a like circular form, the Smelnoi Gorod, surrounded by the Garden-street, and by other streets which must be considered as continuations of it. These rings, forming the body of the city properly so called, are intersected by the Tverskaya, Dimituevka, and other streets radiating from the open places round the Kremlin as the common centre. Nowhere is there a sufficient length of street to form a perspective. The greater number of the streets wind like the paths of an English park, or like rivers meandering through fields.

We always fancy ourselves coming to the end; and in every part where the ground is level, we appear to be in a small city. Fortunately the site of Moscow is in general hilly. The streets undulate continually, and thus offer from time to time points of view, whence the eye is able to range over the vast ocean of house-tops.

The Kremlin is best viewed from the south side, and from the bridge of Moskva Rekoï. From the river that bathes its base, the hill of the Kremlin rises, picturesquely adorned with turf and shrubs. The buildings appear set in a rich frame of water, verdant foliage and snowy wall, the majestic column of Ivan Wilikoi rearing itself high above all, like the axis round which the whole moves. The colours are every where most lively,—red, white, green, gold, and silver. Amidst the confusion of the numerous small, antique edifices, the Belshoi Dvorez (the large palace built by Alexander), has an imposing aspect. It looks like one large mass of white rock, amidst a multitude of fragments. The churches and palaces stand on the plateau of the Kremlin as on a mighty salver; the little red and gold castle church of the Czars, coquetting near the border like some pretty little maiden, and the paler coloured cupolas of the Michaelis and Uspenski

churches representing the broad corpulence of a merchant's wife. The Maloi Dvorez (little palace), and the convent of the Miracle, draw modestly back, as befits hermits and little people. All these buildings stand on the summit of the Kremlin like its crown, themselves again crowned with a multitude of cupolas, of which every church has at least five, and one has sixteen, glittering in gold and silver. The appearance of the whole is so picturesque and interesting, that a painter has only to make a faithful copy, in order to produce a most attractive picture, but I never saw one that did not fall far short of the original, certainly one of the most striking city views in Europe.

The northern side of the Kremlin is the least attractive; a plain high wall with two gates separates it from Krasnoi Ploshtshad (the red place). The most adorned is the north-west side. Here in former times was the Swan lake. It is now drained, and its bed forms the site of the Alexander garden, which stretches from the Moskva to the giant wall of the Kremlin. On the northern side, a beautiful iron grating divides it from the road. The gardens of the Kremlin are to Moscow, what those of the Tuileries are to Paris. In the midst of this garden, the *beau-monde* of Moscow promenaded in the fine spring evenings. Nothing struck me more than the great anxiety of all to keep the middle path, which, as a sort of highway, was always crowded, while not a pair ever wandered to the side paths, as if every one dreaded to separate from his fellows. This habit pre-supposes a singular uniformity of taste in their society. At the foot of the wall, a number of artificial hills have been raised, where on holidays musicians are placed. These hills are hollowed out beneath and supported by pillars, and, on the benches with which they are provided, afford cool resting-places for the weary.

The Tver Boulevards, surrounding the Beloi Gorod, are not unpleasing, though less agreeable than the Alexander garden. They are broad walks laid out with trees, shrubs, and parterres, far more rural and pleasing than the formal lime avenues of Berlin, and they will be much handsomer some time hence, for at present the plantations are very young. The different boulevards round Beloi Gorod have an extent of seven versts, or about a German mile.

Moscow, with its labyrinth of courts, shrubberies, and gardens, and with streets that nowhere take the direct business-like course, has throughout the character of a suburb or village. This is more particularly the case round Semlanoi Gorod. The houses do not stand in straight rows like soldiers, nor are they all of similar height and dimensions; one house will be large and magnificent, another small and paltry; one is painted white, another green, a third yellow. One stands boldly forward, seeking notice, another retreats within its little garden or stately courtyard, in which coaches-and-four are constantly circling. A city, in one sense of the word, that is, an assemblage of human dwellings pressed closely together, till they seem as if hewn out of one rock, Moscow is not, excepting perhaps the square verst contained in the Kremlin and Kitai Gorod.

The breadth of Garden-street and its continuations is imposing, and embraces the city in a circuit of nearly two German miles. In some parts, the houses are thickly planted; in others, the gardens lie in the middle of the road, with paths on either side. In some, the remains of the city-ditch are laid out in walks and flower-beds; in others, the slope of the wall is adorned in a similar manner. The road is sometimes up hill, sometimes

down, passing through the bottom of a valley, or rising to a height that commands a view of the gold-crowned Kremlin and of the hundred parishes of Moscow with their numerous churches. On the one side, roofs and cupolas gleam to the extreme verge of the horizon; on the other, we behold the suburbs with their villas, meadows, and woods, and get an occasional glimpse beyond the encircling wall of earth over the wide uncultivated "Black field," where the winds and powers of nature revel free and uncontrolled. On the road that divides the city from the suburbs, some markets are held; the city and the environs meet here as on neutral ground to exchange commodities; the former brings furniture, household utensils, porcelain, salt, &c.; the latter, flour and garden produce. The streets radiating from the centre here pour forth their streams of life, and from the suburbs, country people press into the heart of the city. The weakest part of Moscow is its rivers. The two chief rivers are the Moskva and the Yausa. The former winds so much that it remains for nearly three miles within the limits of the city. Both are extremely shallow. The Moskva is a meagre nymph, whose proportions become no fuller after she has swallowed up her sister the Yausa, which, in summer, drags heavily along its slimy bed. How different from the beautiful incomparable Neva, with its constantly full bosom and smiling face, moving in inexhaustible abundance past its majestic granite quays! The Moskva wants this girdle of quays, and its banks are everywhere in bad condition. Indirectly, however, these rivers yield the city its finest ornament, if we consider the trees in the moist green valleys, and the gardens on the hill side, as their work. Besides these, Moscow has some other small rivers, of which some, the Ruibenka, for example, begins and ends its course within her walls; and the Neglinya and Tshetshoca do nearly the same. Although but a few versts in length, these rivers, flowing through the classic ground of so populous a city, have, in an historical as in a national-economic point of view, far more interest than many greater streams that pour their waters for hundreds of miles through a wilderness.

#### THE KREMLIN.

What the Acropolis was to Athens, and the Capitol to Rome, the Kremlin is to Moscow. The quarter of the Forum Romanum and the Mons Palatinus in Rome answer nearly to the Kremlin and Kitai Gorod in Moscow. Here, as there, the three chief powers of society have their seat, the political, the spiritual, and the commercial.

The exterior similarity of Rome and Moscow may be followed out much farther while examining the position of their chief temples, their tribunals, money-changers' shops, &c. In the Roman Forum stood the metal statue of the wolf-nurse of Romulus and Remus. In the Forum of Moscow stands the monument of two men who preserved Moscow and Russia with their wealth and their lives, Minin and Posharskoi. The Lacus Curtius, which was in after times diverted from its course, and then resembled a dry moat where the idle people of Rome used to sit, whence its name, Canalicola, finds a counterpart in the garden of Alexander, formed on the muddy bed of the Neglinya, and the little lake that communicated with it. And I may add, that in the Moscow Lacus Curtius, there is no want of idle people, or of the Venus vulgivaga.



The most important gate of Moscow is beyond doubt the "Spass Vorota" (the gate of the Redeemer). It is the *porta sacra*, and *porta triumphalis* of Moscow. Through it entered the triumphant warriors of Ivan Vassilievitch after the conquest of Kasan and Astrakhan, and through those of Michaelis and Alexis, after the victories obtained in the Ukraine. It is the Propylae of the Acropolis of Moscow. Over the gate is a picture of the Saviour, under a glass: this is the holiest part of the holy gate. Before the picture hangs a large ill-formed lamp, in a massive metal frame. All here is antique, even the manner in which the lamp is drawn up. It is suspended by a heavy chain, and under it, to wind it up, stands a complicated old machine, that jarred and rattled here in the time of Michael. A man stands here, whose sole business it is to wind it up. He has a table beside him with wax tapers, which he sells to light up before the picture. This picture is an object of the greatest reverence with the Russians, although few know what it represents. It hangs so high, and the colours are so much faded, that notwithstanding many efforts and much inquiry, I could not find out whether it represented the Redeemer in the act of teaching, or of praying, whether crowned with thorns, or suspended on the cross.

This gate forms a passage under the surmounting tower, of about twenty paces long. Before he enters, every one, be he what he may, Mohammedan, heathen, or Christian, must take off his hat, and keep it off till he have passed through to the other side. It is a singular sight, to watch the carriages-and-four, coming along at full speed, and slackening their pace as they approach the sacred gate, while lord and lackey cross themselves reverently, and drive through hat in hand. Any one passing through and forgetting to uncover, is immediately reminded, nor would it be safe to neglect the warning. Some Germans told me that they had received manual instruction to that effect; for my own part, when I once forgot to take off my hat, I was reminded of it merely by a gently murmured warning, "Shläpa, shläpa batiushka" (The hat, the hat, father).

The gate has naturally obtained its sacred reputation in the course of centuries, through many miracles wrought through its means. Often, as the people relate, the Tartars have been driven back from it; miraculous clouds have veiled the defenders of the Kremlin who sought its shelter, while the pursuing Tartars were unable to find the entrance. Even the presence of the temple-plundering French only served to increase the renown of this gate. They thought the frame of the picture was of gold, and endeavoured to remove it. But every ladder they planted broke in the middle, as the taper-seller assured me, when he told the story. This enraged the French, who then brought a cannon to batter down door and picture together; but do what they would, the dry powder was possessed by the devil of water, who was too much for the devil of fire, and would not explode. At last they made a great fire with coals over the touch-hole. The powder was now subdued, but it exploded the wrong way, blowing the cannon into a thousand pieces, and some of the French artillerymen into the bargain, while gate and picture remained unharmed. The French were now over-mastered by dread, and withdrew, acknowledging the miraculous power. It would be worth while to write the history of the campaign of 1812, under the dictation of a Russian of the

lower class. What a romance of miracles would that period afford, so rich in wonders even in an unadorned narrative!

The Nicholas gate, although not so privileged as the Spass Vorota, has also a wonder-working picture; that of St. Nicholas, over its entrance. It was near the entrance of this gate that Napoleon's powder waggons exploded and destroyed a large part of the arsenal and other buildings. The gate escaped with a rent which split the tower in the middle, as far as the frame of the picture, which stopped its farther progress. Not even the glass of the picture, or that of the lamp suspended before it, was injured. So says the inscription on the gate, and the remarkable rent is eternalized by a stone differing from the rest in colour.

All the gates of the Kremlin are connected by a strong and lofty wall, surrounding it in the form of a vast triangle with many towers. Within this wall are contained all the most interesting and historically important buildings of Moscow; the holiest churches with the tombs of the ancient czars, patriarchs, and metropolitans; the remains of the ancient palace of the czars, the new ones of the present emperor, celebrated convents, the arsenal, senate house, &c. &c., and architectural memorials of every period of Russian history, for every Russian monarch, from the remotest period down to the present ruler, have held it their duty to adorn the Kremlin with some monument.

The two most important remains of the old palaces of the czars are the Terema and the Granovitaya Palata, the former containing the Gymnaceum, the latter the coronation hall of the czars. The real *corps de logis*, the main body of the palace, was so much injured by the French, that no restoration was possible. In its place a new palace was erected, called the Bolshoi Dvorez (great palace), or, from its builder, the Alexanderski Dvorez. The ruins of both the others are by the side of it, and connected with it by stairs and galleries. They were "*na vossdukh*," as our guide told us, "so desolated by the French, that door and window stood open to wind and tempest." The coronation hall was restored long ago, and the Emperor Nicholas has repaired the Terema.

Terema, or Terem, is the name given in every Russian peasant's house to the upper part of the building, round which, sheltered by the projecting roof, a balcony runs, and where the daughters and children of the house are lodged. It may be easily imagined that the Terema plays no insignificant part in the love songs of the people; this part of the old palace of the czars is called pre-eminently the Terema. The architecture is the most peculiar I ever remember to have seen: it consists of four stories; of which the lowest is the largest, gradually diminishing, till the upper floor is so small as only to contain one room; the whole, therefore, nearly resembling the lessening tubes of a telescope when drawn out. On the space thus left by the retreat of the upper story from the ceiling of the under, a balcony is formed, with steps both within and without ascending from one terrace to the other. Every terrace affords a most interesting view of the chaos of old and new buildings below, the Terema having nestled itself in the heart of the Kremlin. In the lowest floor, the throne and audience chambers of the old czars are shown; the upper one was the dwelling of the czarownas (princesses) and the children. All these rooms have been repaired in the old Russian taste. The stoves are very peculiar in form, and all the plates of which they are composed ornamented with pretty paintings. The walls are covered with a kind of painting that reminds us

of the gorgeous glories of the Alhambra. They display an extraordinary confusion of foliage, vine trellices, singularly imagined flowers, woven in arabesques, and painted with the gayest colours. On the painted branches are perched birds, yellow, blue, gold, and silver; squirrels, mice, and other small animals; on every bough hangs a load of costly fruit, and all sorts of knots and figures in gold are intertwined among them. Here and there are portraits of the czars, and other faces, armorial bearings, houses in miniature, and what not. Originals for these fancies were found in old churches, but of course the work of the modern artists is much more elegant, richer, and better executed. From one of the terraces of the Terema, we enter the little church "Spassa solotoyu rishotkoyu" (the Redeemer behind the Golden Balustrade), which was also plundered by the French, but re-endowed most magnificently with gold and silver vessels, by the Emperors Alexander and Nicholas. On the roof are twelve gilded cupolas, the size of chimneys, the sight of which may, in the days of childhood, have delighted many a future czar.

The Granovitaya Palata is a singular little building of a quadrangular or cubical form, hanging like a casket on the huge Bolshoi Dvorez. On the second story it contains nothing but the old coronation hall of the czars, and of the present emperor. The hall is low and vaulted, the arches uniting in the centre of the hall, where they rest upon a thick square column. The walls retain the crimson velvet hangings used at the coronation of the present emperor. The velvet is embroidered in gold, with eagles bearing thunderbolts and the initials of the emperor, placed alternately, and between every eagle and initial stands a golden candelebra. The throne is placed under a velvet canopy opposite the entrance, and over the windows are the armorial bearings of the different governments of Russia. The pillar in the middle is divided by circular stages, on which the regalia are displayed on the day of coronation. Here the emperor sits enthroned after the ceremony in the cathedral, adorned for the first time with all the insignia of his dignity, and dines in the midst of his nobles.

#### THE BOLSHOI AND MALOI DVOREZ.

Moscow, by a kind of political fiction, is still considered as a capital, as well as St. Petersburg. In the Kremlin every thing is kept in constant readiness for the reception of the emperor, as if it were his usual residence.

If we consider the position of Moscow in the very heart of Russia, how the stream of active and commercial life rolling hither from the Black, Caspian, White, and Baltic seas, find their natural centre on the fair hills of the Moskwa; how the whole acquires form and substance from this centre, and that the empire is in fact rather Moscovite than Russian, it will be evident that Moscow seems destined by Nature, as well as by History, to be the capital of Russia, and must one day again become so. The Russian emperors, to a certain extent, acknowledge this, by admitting the before-named fiction to continue. In official documents, Moscow is always designated "*Stolnitza*" (chief city), and the inhabitants call it "*nasha drevnaya stolnitza*" (our old capital) with evident satisfaction. "No foreigner can know what magic power these three words have over a Russian heart," said Professor S. once to me, as we drove out of Moscow,



and lie took leave of his native city with tears in his eyes. He assured me that every Russian loved Moscow as much as *he* did, and yet more, and that even those who had never seen it, clung to the idea of the "holy city" with the same devotion as to "God and the Emperor." We may comprehend then how important a place for Russia that city must be, which, besides its 300,000 inhabitants, is also peculiarly the one to which many millions of loving eyes are directed.

The palaces built here by the Emperors Alexander and Nicholas upon the Kremlin are two in number: the Great and the Small palace. The former, built by the Emperor Alexander, is very lofty compared to the length of the façade, but the whole effect is good, when viewed from the base upwards. The interior is not very magnificent. The walls are of brick, the windows of ordinary glass; the furniture is elegant, but not strikingly so; the marble in the throne and audience chambers is only imitation, and the great looking-glasses are not single pieces. There is infinitely more splendour in the houses of many of the mighty emperor's subjects than here. Yet the palace is not without interest; the exalted persons who have inhabited it during the twenty years of its existence are so few, that their chambers remain in the same state in which they left them; and for every new illustrious guest new apartments are prepared. The servants who attend strangers to view the palace announce the former destination of each room. "This is the *Stolovaya komnata* (throne-room) of the Emperor Alexander: this is the *vannaya komnata* (bath room) of the Empress Maria Feodorovna, and so forth of every successive imperial tenant. This is somewhat monotonous; and the good people do not even vary the monotonous catalogue by a few personal anecdotes. The servants employed in Russian palaces are so often changed, that there is never united so much historical *matériel* in one person, as in some of our German princely abodes, for example, where an old gray-headed servant is often a living chronicle.

In every chamber such things are preserved as memorials, as the illustrious personages may have happened to leave behind them. In the cabinet of Maria Feodorovna, for example, a box containing "*véritable pâté de gumaux en Pastilles, faite par d'Henault à Paris,*" has the honour to be preserved as something valuable, because it was used by an empress. The pictures in the cabinet of this empress breathe a gentle spirit of love and humanity that makes a favourable impression on every one who enters. They are beautiful drawings in sepia; copies of pictures, the choice of which betrays not only a pure taste, but a feeling heart. There are two St. Cecílias after Guido Reni, a Penitent Magdalen in the cave, a Transfiguration of the Virgin after Raffaele, the "Night" of Correggio, and others in the same spirit.

In the chamber of the Emperor Alexander are also some *pamyatniks* (souvenirs): a handkerchief which he left here before he set off for Tagan rog, as if he had bequeathed it to the Muscovites to weep his loss; and some instruments which indicate the occupations of the emperor, as a rule, black-lead pencil, and Indian rubber, a quadrant, note book, &c. His bed-chamber is as simple as it can well be; a bed with a straw mat-rass, half-a-dozen leather-covered chairs, and a small looking-glass, make up the whole furniture.

The "Maloi Dvorez" (little palace), was built by Nicholas. Neither is there here any great magnificence displayed. There are some pictures

representing scenes from the Polish history. Here I saw, for the first time, how the Polish kings were crowned in the open air on the field of Vola, the solemn procession of the nobles, the throne placed on a carpet in the middle of the field around a bank of turf, within which sat the clergy and the nobles, awaiting the king, all with their swords by their sides.

A picture by an untaught Russian subaltern officer, representing Minin and Posharski in the field, is not without value as a work of art, and has an interest as a kind of sequel to the monument on the "Red place." In the latter, Minin is depicted rousing the prince to arms by his patriotic eloquence; in the former the two are shown victorious over the Poles.

Nothing I saw here amazed me so much as the bed of the Emperor Nicholas, as it must every one who is accustomed to think of kings and emperors reposing on velvet and down. The Emperor Alexander slept on straw covered with leather, but it was loosely stuffed. The mattress of the Emperor Nicholas, on which he lies without any other bed between, is stuffed so hard and tightly, that there are certainly few peasants whose couch is ruder than their emperor's. A homily might be preached on it with good effect to some people. The bed stands in a room wholly unadorned, with bare white walls. The library in the emperor's cabinet contains all the books that have been written about Moscow, in French, Russian, and German; they are quite in their place here.

In one of the rooms, under a glass cover, there were a number of loaves which had been presented to the emperor on his various visits to Moscow. These loaves have the form and size of those used by the Russians at the sacrament, something of the figure of a cup and saucer reversed. On the top a seal is impressed by the priest; and in partaking of the sacrament, a triangular piece is cut off and eaten. When the emperor comes to Moscow, the "Golova" (the chief) of the city comes, attended by some of the citizens, and brings a silver salver with a gold saltcellar and a loaf, which he presents to the emperor, requesting him to taste the "bread of Moscow." The emperor thanks him, breaks off a piece of the roll and eats it; he then invites the Golova to eat *his* bread, that is a splendid dinner, at which the magistrate is presented to the empress and the imperial family.

#### THE ORUSHEINAYA PALATA.

The various buildings of the Kremlin lie scattered in very picturesque disorder, so that there is nowhere space for a regularly formed open place among them. The most regular is the Senate Place, with the arsenal to the right, the Senate House to the left, and on the south side the Orusheinaya Palata (the palace of arms). In this spot, fettered by their own weight, and condemned to eternal silence, lie prisoners from all parts of Europe; namely, the cannon with which the invading people of the west strewed the road of Smolensk in 1812. The cannon are ranged in long rows with small shields erected on staves to indicate to what nation they belonged; as Polish cannon, so many; Westphalian, so many;—the sight of these will hurt no one's feelings, as the state has ceased to exist. Dutch so many; few Mynheers wander as far as Moscow to be pained at the view. The Bavarian cannon are handsome, new, and bright; nor are Prussian wanting; and of French there are enough to stock an arsenal. The only nation of which no representatives are to be found here is the

English; I know not that Russia possesses anywhere an English trophy.

In the vestibule of the palace are ranged another kind of prisoners; a whole collection of busts of noble Poles; the quiet memorials of very unquiet gentlemen, mostly of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, finely executed, and evident likenesses. The collection was brought from Warsaw. It is a striking fact that Russia is compelled to decorate her public buildings with the portraits of foreigners, and as yet possesses no such collection of her own celebrated men. However, people hurry past these interesting portraits to view the regalia in the upper floors.

The crowns are very advantageously placed, each on an elegant tripod an ell and a half in height, where they repose, on a cushion of velvet embroidered with gold, under a glass bell. Among the thrones placed here, some are very interesting, and the greater part very costly. The throne sent to Boris Godunoff, in 1606, is a solid mass of wood plated over with gold, so that it has the appearance of massive metal. In the gold, many large and beautiful turquoises are set, and here and there an oriental pearl. The throne of Ivan Vassilievitch is of ivory; it may have had a fine effect when new and fresh, but it is now grey and discoloured; that of Alexis Michailovitsh is of massive silver. The throne of Peter the Great and his brother Ivan is the largest and ugliest of all; it looks as if the church-stool of a counsellor in some old German imperial city had served for the model. Behind the throne is a curtain, and behind the curtain, in the back that supports the canopy, there is an opening where their sister Sophia used to sit when her brothers gave audience, that she might whisper to them the answers she thought fitting. The thrones of the later emperors are more tasteful, but scarcely more costly than the chair of an American president; simple chairs of antique form under canopies of crimson velvet. The Polish throne used by the present emperor in Warsaw is likewise here.

Sceptres and balls are here in abundance. I found none more interesting than the broken sceptre of the kings of Poland, broken not metaphorically only, but literally. The Polish sceptre is a long greenish stone, set in gold at the extremities; the stone was broken diagonally in the middle, and the two pieces lay side by side. I thought this so remarkable, that I asked the director of the collection, who had the goodness to receive me, about this fracture. He had never noticed it, and knew nothing about it. A person who was viewing them with me merely remarked *C'est un hasard bien drôle*.

In the hall of warlike trophies, none is more interesting than the litter in which Charles XII. was borne from the battle of Pultava. Voltaire says that it was shattered by a ball; but it has been so well patched and repaired, that no traces of injury are to be seen. It would have been more interesting if it had remained as the Russian balls had left it.

In the last hall, most splendid horse trappings are shown, mostly presents from Turkish sultans, on whom Russia has of late imposed so many bridles and chains, that the idea may have suggested itself to them, of returning the presents in kind. The whole are splendidly adorned with precious stones, saddle, as well as bit and bridle. In the lowest story there is a large collection of singular-looking old carriages, which one cannot look at without a feeling of joy that they are at last resting in peace, for most fearful and nerve-shattering must the clatter have been when those massive



wheels rumbled along, and all that timber groaned and shrieked. Some of them had whole fir trees for their axles, and seemed destined to be dragged by the whole nation to bear their idols about from place to place.

Another giant birth, or rather embryo, for it never arrived at development, was the model of an enormous palace, designed to have been built on the Kremlin hill, by Catherine. Every thing, with the exception of some old churches, was to have been levelled with the ground, and one giant palace to replace them. Fortunately for the lovers of antiquity, and to the joy of all Russian patriots, the plan was, I know not why, never carried into execution.

#### THE ARSENAL.

The arsenal contains a magazine of weapons sufficient to arm a hundred thousand men. When I visited it, I found a non-commissioned officer busied in patching a flag of Peter the Great, which had lain here in a tattered condition since the year 1812. The spoils of Pugatsheff were the only antiquities I found here. This rebellious Cossack once terrified the Russian empire with cannon, at which Russian children would now laugh. They are nothing more than clumsy iron tubes, and the coarse seam of the joining is yet visible. The flag carried before this plunderer from the Caspian is worthy of the cannon. It is a coarse sackcloth, with a Madonna painted on it. This rag was fastened to a staff on which no more art was expended than on a hop-pole. It probably possessed a kind of sanctity, for a breach in the centre was carefully repaired with an iron ring. In many corners of the arsenal the Polish eagle droops its pinions. The weapons are mostly of Tula manufacture. In a press are kept specimens of the muskets of other nations, English, French, and others, by which to test the advance of Russian skill. A Russian musket from Tula costs about eighteen francs, half as much as an English one at cost price in England itself, but they are very inferior to the English. They are apt to burst in a discharge.

#### THE MARKET-PLACES.

In Moscow there are of course markets in every corner of the city, but its chief commerce centres in Kitai-Gorod, the centre of the whole, where stands the *gostinnoi dvor* (bazaar) and the *Ryâdi* (rows of shops).

The *gostinnoi dvor* of Moscow is, after that of the fair of Nishney Novgorod, the largest in Russia. It is a colossal building of three stories; three rows of pillars and three rows of shops stand, one above another, connected together by countless passages and steps. Beneath is the greatest crowd, above, the greatest commerce. In these courts and galleries, from year's end to year's end, is the greatest standing warehouse of the empire, and a continual fair. Hither, from the Black Sea, streams all that the Levant can produce; from the Baltic, the produce of Western Europe; from Siberia, what China and Tartary yield. Moscow is the centre of the whole interior traffic of Russia. Along the galleries long-bearded Russians and black-robed Persians, with their pointed sheepskin caps, were roaming about; silken-clad Bokharians rustled by, and Tartars and Greeks sat on the balustrades reckoning their gains. The *gostinnoi dvor* has magazines and shops for the most considerable merchants of

Moscow, who trade here wholesale only, and are more than nine hundred in number.

The number of shops in the Ryädi are not less than twelve hundred; all united under one common roof. Not only the shops, but the passages between, are covered, but the roof is so awkwardly constructed, that in the strongest sunshine people stumble in darkness, and after the slightest shower wade through mud.

It would be difficult, nevertheless, to find a market of a more cheerful character than the Moscow Ryädi, not that it can be said the Russian merchants are more indifferent to gain than others, but they have, notwithstanding their lust of gain, a cheerfulness of temperament wholly wanting to the German and English merchant. The Russians carry on their business in the midst of praying, tea-drinking, ball and draughts, playing, laughing, and gossiping. Their appetite is always ready, and nearly as many sellers of edibles are to be met with here as customers, with every thing necessary for breakfast ready prepared, including plates and knives and forks. They play at ball in the narrow passages between their shops, making use of a great leathern ball filled with air, which is struck by the foot. But the favourite game is draughts, which they play before their doors, in the shops, and sometimes in the middle of the street; however, they neither play for money, nor bet; they love their kopeks too well to expose them to such danger.

The whole range of shops are plentifully adorned with pictures of saints nailed to the beams with lamps burning before them, singing birds in cages, and whole flights of pigeons, which nestle under the eaves of the shops, and are cherished and fed by the owners as a kind of sacred bird.

The merchandise is arranged here as elsewhere in masses, not promiscuously; here a range of thirty shops for paper, another range for spices, a third for ornamental articles, a fourth for pictures of saints. In this last article, as might be expected in Moscow the holy, a very large trade is driven. Here are to be found pictures for every place and occasion; for halls, bedchambers, churches, private chapels, coffee-houses, and ships; big ones for the merchant who likes a large foundation for his faith; small ones for the palaces of the great, where they are half hidden behind the curtains. I was surprised to find among these, some copies of Roman catholic saints; gloriously caricatured, it is true, by Russian artists, but honoured by the Russian traders as the Greek pictures are. Besides the pictures, all sorts of sacred utensils are here exposed to sale, great silver candlesticks, lamps of all sizes, crosses, and amulets. The most striking objects to foreigners are the nuptial crowns that are placed on the heads of the enamoured pair when they are betrothed in the church. These crowns are the strangest looking things that were ever seen, consisting of a multitude of silver leaves, flowers, ears of corn, &c., which are hung with every thing that can be thought of that glitters at little cost—stars of gilt foil, cut glass, false stones, and a thousand other things.

There are now thirty booksellers'-shops in Moscow. Among them are some that have a stock of not less than 100,000 volumes. Those of Glasunoff and Shireinoff are the principal ones. The latter is said to have 200,000 volumes in his shop. In 1806 there were only three booksellers of any consequence in the city, in 1808 four, and in 1810 six. After

1812, however, whose flames appear to have exercised a wonderfully stimulating effect on the minds of the Russians, the number of the venders of literature increased rapidly to ten, then to twenty, and at last to thirty. Before 1812 the annual average of spelling-books consumed in Moscow was 10,000. Immediately after that memorable year, the number increased to 30,000, and in 1837, no less than 200,000 civil and ecclesiastical primers found customers. The *Viedomosti*, the celebrated newspaper of Moscow, that has now been published since 1761, had only 2000 subscribers before 1812. Immediately after that year the number rose to 6000, and the regular sale is now 12,000 copies. The taste for reading is greatly on the increase among the trading and lower classes. I often observed a group of merchants' servants sitting together, listening to one who read aloud; nor were the books selected bad ones. Karamsin's *History of Russia* was one I often saw in their hands.

The stranger will not look without interest at the shops of the money changers in these Ryädi. I do not believe that such quantites of gold and silver, as are seen on the insignificant tables of these changers, could be so safely exposed anywhere else. But in every country there are certain things that seem to be sacred and unapproachable—here, they are the money tables. It is asserted that nothing is ever lost from them, although the owners are by no means particularly watchful of their tempting wares. The shops are often left to take care of themselves, and the changer, when a customer presents himself, has perhaps to be called in from a gossip with his neighbour.

The shops of the dealers in wax-lights naturally occupy a great space here. The population of Moscow use at least three times as many tapers for their saints as the people of St. Petersburg; and in the thousand churches of this city, many a hundred weight of wax is consumed for pious purposes. The bees of the Ukraine and Lesser Russia furnish the greater part of this commodity.

All liquids, such as beer, wine, &c., are excluded from the commerce of the Gostinnoi Dvor and the Ryädi; also all bulky articles, such as hay and straw, and such things as must be had in all the corners of the city; bread, for example. In this commercial quarter, the dealers are exclusively Russian, with here and there an Asiatic, but no West Europeans. For the wine drinkers there are the Cave Anglaise, and the Cave Française, but they offer nothing for particular observation, being in all respects like those of St. Petersburg, except that the wines of Greece and the Crimea are also to be had. In St. Petersburg, Greek wine is seldom drunk, and Crimean not at all; here they are much liked; the Santorino particularly, which may be had at a low price all over Russia. The Crimean wine-shops are generally establishments belonging to the proprietors of the southern vineyards.

The fine West European wares, French books, and objects of ornament and luxury, French and English cloths, and Swiss confectionaries, are to be found on the Kusnetzkoï-Most (Smiths bridge). All the inscriptions there announce something foreign, and recommend themselves in the French language. In the print-shops it is easier to find views of London, Paris, Calcutta, and New York, than of St. Petersburg or Moscow. I asked in one for some Russian costumes, and was told they were expecting them from Paris. Many more pictures are manufactured at Moscow than in St. Petersburg, but they consist



exclusively of bad imitations of originals published in London or Paris. It is incredible what numbers of caricatures of cupids and goddesses, celebrated men and women, and other pictures, issue from Moscow for the supply of the interior. Moscow's original genius shows itself only in representations of churches, saints, &c.

At the foot of the Kremlin, the flower-market of Moscow is held. It is a repetition of what may be seen in spring in the hay-market of St. Petersburg, but much prettier. In Moscow it has the appearance of a village of which every house stands in its own garden. Huts of painted wood are filled with cherry-trees in blossom, with roses of all kinds, and all such flowers as will not bear exposure to the open air. Before the door sits the guardian of these fragrant prisoners. The huts stand at a certain distance from one another, surrounded by flower-beds and little shrubberies, every bed containing only one kind of flower. Here is a whole bed of violets, there a painted field of ranunculus; behind are ranged the larger kinds of plants and bushes, in whose branches the birds twitter and chirp as in their native groves. A more agreeable stroll cannot be imagined than among these huts, to look at their contents, and talk with the quiet dealers about their flower trade. On the limits of the colony, a number of vehicles are constantly at work, conveying flowers and shrubs to and from the market, and at one end of it are the waggons of those who visit the place only for the one day, who have no regular stand here, but carry about with them house and garden on four wheels.

Many flowers are sold here, but more are hired only. Many great personages, who are not much in the habit of giving dinners, or wish to make an extra show on some particular occasion, find their account in borrowing rather than buying. Every rose, cherry, and orange-tree has therefore its selling price and its letting price, which amounts, if the plant be a choice one, to several rubles.

#### THE SECOND-HAND MARKET.

The markets for second-hand wares play a more important part in Russia than with us, because much greater changes of fortune take place there than in our more solid land. Employés are often displaced, and the wealthy change their places of residence more frequently. In St. Petersburg the trade in rags and rubbish is carried on in an enclosed place, the Tshukin Dvor; in Moscow this peculiar stream of social life has its being along the wall of Kitai Gorod, in a broad street extending from one gate to the other in this quarter. In the middle of the street stand tables with all kinds of eatables, and here a dingy long-haired race, bawl and bargain the whole year through, and may be observed at leisure by the stranger, who need not apprehend that he will be surprised in so ungenteel an occupation by any other decently dressed person. The booths next the wall are devoted to antiquities; old clothes that have strutted through many a different class of society; old gold and silver thread, the spoil of some officer's epaulets; old books whose exteriors tell that they have been made use of. Opposite are the chandlers and picture dealers; in the middle is a constantly changing tableau that no eye can wholly embrace, and no pen describe. The most striking figures are the dealers in female attire; they trail about on their own persons the complete toilette of a

dozen maidservants or peasant-girls; piling a tower of hats upon their heads, one upon another; on one side, a huge bundle of lace is pinned, on the other, some twenty ells of gaudy ribbons flutter in the breeze; over their shoulders hang garments of every fashion for the last ten years, and shawls in as many strata as a dish of Livonian pancakes; and beside these, they hang and roll round their bodies as many choice articles of clothing as can be hung and rolled together. Men may be seen equipped in like manner in masculine habiliments.

But all dealers are not so richly provided; individuals are to be seen dragging about a solitary old coat the whole day long, sounding its praises unweariedly; one old man with a snow-white beard was lovingly clasping a large picture of some saint, who, he hoped, would favour him so far as to let him earn a dinner by exchanging him for money.

Those who love to feel a nation's pulse or the bumps of its leading follies on its scull, should not fail to study the picture-booths. These remarkable productions of native fancy are of very old existence in Russia, and untouched as yet by any European improvement, continue in the purest and most unadulterated Russian taste. All are more or less of a religious or rather a mythological nature. The most celebrated occurrences from the creation to the last new miracle of Voronesh, all so palpably depicted in red, yellow, and green, that the most stiff-necked infidel in the world must needs believe. It seemed to me as if the kingdom of the devil were much larger than that of the angels in these pictures; for death, the devil, and his adjutant (*Gospodin Sträptshik*, as he is here generally called), were much oftener to be met with than seraphim and cherubim. The monsters of the Apocalypse, and the Babylonian, Assyrian, Macedonian and Roman empires, were very frequent. If these look odd enough in Greek, it may be imagined what effect they must produce when translated into the Russian of a Muscovite peasant. The original type may have come from Greece, and may be yet found on the walls of church and cloisters, whence they have been copied by the wood carvers, who have added some witticisms of their own. I saw, for example, in the Novospasski convent in Moscow, the four chief monarchies of the world with long coiled-up tails, and monstrous jaws filled with dragons' teeth, sitting together quite familiarly like so many house-spiders.

Many of the pictures were not without wit. Among others I observed one on which was inscribed in great letters "*Deneshnoi diabol*" (the gold devil), which I purchased immediately for my collection of travelling souvenirs. The devil, painted purple, is hovering over the world; from hand, foot, mouth, and nose, gold is falling in abundance, and golden ducats are creeping like vermin from under his hair. His adjutant (*Gospodin Sträptshik*) rides behind him on a yellow monstrosity which he is flogging with Mercury's wand. On the ground, men are sprawling to catch the golden shower. A baker has fastened a thick rope round the devil, and is pulling the fiend to him. A shoemaker has a weak thread round the great toe of the tailed enemy, and will not, it may easily be seen, be able to do much with him. An hotel-keeper has heaped up his tuns and barrels, into which the gold runs in at one end and the wine out at the other; yet thirstier than his guests, he holds up a glass to catch the gold that is falling sideways. A lady stands near in all her finery, and the whole abundance of Russian beauty, that is, with a thick plaster of red paint on each cheek, and an *embonpoint* that a beer tun might

envy. A priest is standing with his foot on the stool of his pulpit, one hand held out in a preaching attitude, while the other is holding out his mitre to catch the fertilizing shower, the devil showering it down upon him with both hands. Close to the priest is a church vessel, with a mighty ray of gold streaming into it. The oddest fancy is the artist, on whose shoulders dance a couple of squirrels; to his cap a multitude of butterflies are attached fluttering at the end of a thread, and his head-dress is also larded with pens and pencils. He stands afar off, where none of the gold shower reaches, and fires a pistol in the air. Apart from the turmoil sits, as a quiet observer, a little ape; he has one hand raised as if preaching to the mob, none of whom heed him. The label appended I could not decipher. Such pictorial satires issue in abundance from every paltry *attelier* of Moscow.

#### LUKHMANNOFF'S MAGAZINE.

That little shabby-looking men have often plenty of money in their pockets was a fact I had already learned in St. Petersburg and elsewhere. I was therefore not surprised when in the wealthy possessor of this magazine, one of those known to all the great world of Russia for antiquities of the costliest kind, I saw a man in a little, old, green, threadbare coat, with a long white beard, who spoke no language but the Russian of the Muscovite peasant. In this language, however, he has much to say that is interesting. For fifty years he has had dealings with half Russia; at Ms door almost every Russian grandee of that period has knocked, and through his hands all the ducats of Moscow have passed more than once.

In Lukhmannoff's magazine costly rarities of every kind are to be found; whole presses full of snuffboxes of the most curious workmanship, some of them worth three, four, nay, as much as twelve thousand rubles; small caskets containing, within a few cubic inches, the purchase of some square versts of land, and a toy made by command of Louis XIV. for the Dauphin. It is a small temple standing in a court and surrounded by a wall, the whole of solid gold. In this court are the figures of several animals, birds, elephants, &c., the bodies consisting of real pearls, in which some sport of nature had designed the torsoes of the animals, and the artist had added the legs and horns, and so on, in pure gold. The figures are fastened to the golden floor, and on the steps of the temple is the figure of a huntsman with his gun. This very foolish, unchildlike toy is a proof how little Louis knew of children. There cannot be the least doubt that the first Noah's ark from Nürnberg would have given the Dauphin far more pleasure than this fine golden temple of Diana, which must have cost an enormous sum. Lukhmannoff estimates it at fifty thousand rubles.

He has also a collection of coins, from the first ruble of the olden time, which was simply a piece hacked off a bar of silver with a hatchet, to the newest and most elegant die; and many of the now rare coins of the false Demetrius. I bought a copper "beard token" of Peter the Great. It is well known how desirous Peter was to rid his subjects of their beards, but he knew not how deeply rooted these beards were, and even *he* was obliged to give way in some measure. He took off the prohibition, therefore,



and levied a tax of fifty-two kopeks per beard, and every man who paid it received a token in copper to "legitimate" the wearing of it to the police. It is moderately large, encircled with a garland, and has the impression of a nose, a lip, and a long beard in the centre. On the reverse, the inscription "Denyi vsati" (beard-money paid).

Mr. Lukhmannoff told me that he had laid the foundation of his fortune in the time of Catherine. Sixty years ago all his property consisted of a few old clothes and boots. A good price paid for some enabled him to extend his dealings, and the first step made in the path of gain rendered every succeeding one easier. In those times of profusion, when favourites made their fortunes so easily in Catherine's splendid court, and when the proverb, "Lightly come, lightly go," was so admirably exemplified, he "brought his sheep to dry land." He told me that the fickleness of his customers was often so excessive that many bought from him under the promise of sending for the articles the next morning, but that before that time they had lost all desire of possessing their toys, and paid considerable fines to be rid of their bargains. Some of the articles would thus return to his hands two or three times, by which he often gained more than the things were worth; in this way he became a capitalist, and his revenue is now estimated at four hundred thousand rubles.

## CHURCHES.

The Christian religion and church architecture were brought from Constantinople to Russia at about the same time. Both became modified on a foreign soil and among so different a people; and hence arose the Russian Greek church, and the Byzantine Russian architecture. No country in the world has so few old churches as Russia, because formerly all were built of wood, and therefore soon fell into decay, or became the prey of the flames. A few stone churches were built towards the latter end of the middle ages, and are still to be seen in Kieff, Moscow, and a few other cities. Although the most renowned and honoured temples in Russia, they are excessively small, and incredibly dark. The roofs rise in five paltry cupolas, which sit on them like the breasts on the statue of Diana at Ephesus. Every cupola is surmounted by a tall gold cross resting on a crescent, and hung about with all sorts of chains that fasten it to the cupola. Without, these cupolas are painted of the gaudiest colours the palette can afford, and are often gilded or silvered into the bargain. From their interior a gigantic picture looks down, whose enormous ugliness is much better calculated to scare than to assist devotion. It is generally the figure of the Redeemer, the Virgin, or of John, and in the centre cupola is the pictured form of an old gray-headed man, meant to represent the Father. The walls are usually painted from top to bottom with grotesque-looking saints and angels, all pretty much in the style of the fifteen-ell-long Mary in the church of Marienberg in Russia, and the Roland of Bremen. Fortunately, they are pretty well faded, and it will hardly occur to any in the coming century to restore them. The centre cupola is supported by four pillars so immoderately thick that they diminish the space of the church very considerably.

If there are few old churches in Russia, there is at least no scarcity of new ones. The essential part in the new style is naturally copied from the

old, and reduces itself to a square form with a large cupola in the centre, and four smaller ones at the sides. The principal innovation is a lavish use of columns, generally the ornamented Corinthian, with an enlargement of space and an increased number of windows. In the new churches, the chains with which the cupolas in the old ones are loaded, like filigree-work, are left out, but otherwise all are alike be-cupola'd, be-crossed, be-pillared in white, green and gold, from the Black Sea to the Baltic, and thence to the Pacific Ocean. The cupolas and towers of these churches are mere ornaments, and serve no other purpose, as our steeples do. The custom of placing clocks in them is wholly unknown in Russia.\*

The bells are not suspended in the cupola, but placed in a side building erected for the purpose—the *Kolokolnik* (the bell-bearer). In the country churches, where the land is rich in trees, the *Kolokolnik* is generally an old oak, on whose boughs the whole chime is suspended, as if the tree bore bells by way of fruit. In some places the bells are hung under a kind of triumphant arch, as in Novgorod, but bell-towers are more frequent. These towers are hung as full of bells as a palm-tree is full of cocoa-nuts: small, middle-sized, and of colossal dimensions, tinkling, ringing, and bellowing. When such a *Kolokolnik* sets to work on a holiday, and gives its lungs full play, or when in a capital, twenty or thirty at a time begin their concert, heaven have mercy on the ears that are not dead to every sense of harmony! It is a curious sight to see a Russian ringer begin his work. He does not put the bells themselves in motion; indeed, they have no clapper. To every bell a moveable hammer is attached, and, from the hammers, strings are passed to the ringer. If he have only two to ring he sets down and pulls on either side alternately. But when he has many, he holds some in his hands, fastens another to his back, and sets others in motion with his legs. The motions he is obliged to make have a most comic effect; a former Czar found the business so diverting that he used generally to ring them himself in the court church. What renders this noise so disagreeable is, that the people never allow the sounds to succeed in measured time, but hammer away, right and left, like smiths upon an anvil; however, the bells are not attuned to each other, but clash one against the other in fearful discord. The bell-founder's art is a very old one in Russia. Herodotus already speaks of great castings of metal as practised in the Scythian land.

In the north of Russia the severity of the climate has introduced the use of summer and winter churches. They are generally under one building, the summer church being placed above the winter one. The former is lofty, airy, and light in the upper or second story of the edifice: the latter is a low dark vault, in which light and air are sparingly admitted. There are many of these double churches in St. Petersburg, and also in Moscow. In the new churches stoves are introduced instead, and the entrances provided with double doors. When in addition to the warm air and the stoves we have the tick of a house-clock, these churches have quite the effect of sitting-rooms.

The space within the church, destined for the congregation, is separated from the sanctuary by the *Ikonostas* (picture-wall), so called because the side next the church is covered from top to bottom with pictures of saints.

\* Here and there the hours are struck by a watchman upon a bell. In some churches an ordinary house-clock is set up in the interior of the church.

Before this wall runs a low gallery cutting off a slightly-elevated space which is ascended by a few steps. This species of anteroom is destined for the choir, which is placed at the side. In the midst of the sanctuary stands the altar. The objects placed on it are a large Bible often adorned with gold and precious stones, a cross of silver on which the Saviour is rarely represented, the Greek church, in general, not tolerating sculptured images, but on which angel heads or other ornaments are simply traced. This cross is also laid flat upon the table, standing crosses being never seen in the Greek churches. Between the Bible and the cross, the host is kept in a box, often of metal, in the form of a hill set thick with angels, and within a cave is a small silver coffin containing the host itself. In one corner of the sanctuary stands a table for the bread and wine, before it is carried in procession to the altar, for the transubstantiation; and in the other a looking-glass, a comb, and other appendages of the toilet, for the use of the priests. Besides this looking-glass there is generally a room which, besides being appropriated to the priestly wardrobe, often contains many articles of great value; splendid mitres, crosiers, bibles, and other things, presents from various princes, besides a number of loose jewels used for the adornment of new robes.

The whole ground on which a church stands is holy, but most particularly and for ever holy is the spot on which an altar has once rested; not even a priest can unconsecrate it. Though the church vanish, no other building must arise there, nor must any human foot profane that spot. Should the church be burned or pulled down, this place is carefully indicated. A stone is sunk with an inscription stating the name of the church and the manner of its disappearance; round the stone a little wall is built, and the whole is roofed in. In laying out new plans for towns, these little monuments, which are on no account to be removed, are often sad stumblingblocks, and sometimes lie very strangely and awkwardly in the road.

It is difficult to decide on the exact numbers of the churches in Moscow, the accounts given differ so widely. While some speak of 1500, others reduce the number to 500, and others even to 260. Some reckon every chapel attached to the larger churches, those in private houses, convents, and those erected over graves, which might easily swell the number to thousands. Some people reckon the summer and winter churches separately, and others together. There are even some churches in Moscow which do in fact consist of several joined together, of which each has its own name and is quite apart from the rest. In this manner the church of the Protection of the Holy Virgin might be set down as twelve. Lastly, some of the convents have one chief church, and three, four, and even five supplementary churches, in each of which service is performed only once a year; these are passed over in some estimates, and included in others.

It is sufficient to say that the buildings in Moscow destined for divine service are countless. The most classic and holiest of all, the quintessence of the whole sacred mass, is within the inmost heart of Moscow, on the height of the Kremlin. This consecrated spot *Sabornoi-Ploshtshad* (Cathedral Place), has been surrounded by the Emperor Nicholas with a lofty and magnificent iron grating, and contains the church of the Czars' tombs; the church with the tombs of the Patriarchs; the cathedral where the coronation takes place; the church in the old palace of the Czars; the great John, the highest tower in the city of the Czars, and the chapel



of Mary of the Cave. It is hard to say which of these is the most important; perhaps the preference belongs to the Uspenski Sabor (the Cathedral of the Resurrection), as the emperors are crowned in it, and the Patriarch formerly officiated there.

The name of the cathedral leads a Western European to expect great spaces and lofty arches, in which the voice returns in echo, and the eye loses itself in the distance; but these expectations will be fulfilled by no Russian cathedral. According to Russian taste, a church must be crowded with pictures and shrines, and thus, in this cathedral, eye and spirit are bewildered with the glitter of gold and the glare of colour. The whole church is gilt within; even the heavy pillars that support the five cupolas are covered with gilding from top to bottom, and the walls the same, and on this golden ground large fresco paintings have been executed, the subjects taken from the Bible. The figures are gigantic, and distinguished by astonishing strength of grimace. They are said to have been painted by foreign artists at the command of the Czar Vassili Ivanovitsh, but they are right Russian as well as the church. The artist must have yielded to the national spirit. There is more gilding than gold in this church. The French seem to have distinguished the true metal from the false better here than in the castle chapel, where they left a quantity of gold, mistaking it for copper. The guide showed us a part of a pillar where he asserted the value of the metal removed had been calculated with a blacklead pencil, by Napoleon's own hand. As, however, it has all been painted over, and only a white place is now shown where the writing is said to have stood, it is not very easy to believe the story.

The priests contrived, however, to have a pretty little salvage out of the shipwreck of 1812; among other things a Mount Sinai of pure ducat gold, a present from Prince Potemkin. On the summit stands a golden Moses, with a golden table of the law; and within the mountain is a golden coffin to contain the host. It is said to weigh 120,000 ducats. A Bible, the gift of Natalia Narishkin, the mother of Peter the Great, is so large, and the cover so laden with gold and jewels, that it requires two strong men to carry it into the church. It is said to weigh 120 pounds. There is a gigantic deacon of this church, who sometimes displays his strength by taking the whole burden, like a second St. Christopher, on his own pious and enormous shoulders. The emeralds on the cover are an inch long, and the whole binding cost 1,200,000 rubles, a sum for which all the books in Moscow might be handsomely bound. The other remarkable objects in this church are, the great chestnut-coloured wooden throne-seat of Vladimir the Great, within a house of brass-work, which they told us was an imitation of the tomb of Christ; and a miraculous picture of the Saviour, which daily performs miracles quite incredible, that are faithfully believed by every one here. "Within this month," said the priest who showed us the picture, "a merchant lame in both hands and feet was brought hither, and, after he had prayed fervently before this picture, he rose up healed and walked out of the door, which he had been carried through on his bed."

The Arkhangelski Sabor (Church of the Archangel Michael), although dedicated to the bearer of the flaming sword, has such very diminutive windows that all the light of its jewels, and all the glitter of its gold and its shrines, are only sufficient very partially to enlighten its blackened walls. The star that shines the brightest in the night of this church is that of a little boy, on whose bier more blood has been shed and more sighs lavished

than on that of any child in the world, and whose name, once so terrible in Russia, is now worshipped there.

It is the last false Demetrius, who has long rested here, and enjoyed the homage of all Russia; and as he now makes no claim to an earthly kingdom, he enjoys his share in the heavenly kingdom uncontested. Of course the Russians do not esteem him the *false* but the *veritable* Demetrius. The fact they adduce in proof of this is exactly what raises in others the greatest doubt. They say that after the body of the royal child had been in vain sought for in Uglitsh, where he was murdered by the emissaries of Boris Godunoff, it arose, coffin and all, from the ground, at God's command, and presented itself to the longing people, whereby its genuineness was so palpably manifested, that it would be absurd to express any doubt on the subject.

Be this as it may, the mummy of a boy of five or six years of age, magnificently clad, is exposed on festivals in an open coffin. Every part is veiled but the forehead, which is kissed by his adorers. Above the coffin, the portrait of the little canonized prince is attached to a pillar set in a raised frame of the finest gold. Being well concealed it escaped the French in 1812. The events happened two hundred years ago, but they yet live in as lively remembrance with the people, as if all had occurred but yesterday. While we strangers were standing with curious eyes before the picture, a fat merchant's wife on one side and an old peasant on the other came up to us, and began to relate the history of the holy child. The latter played the historian's part, and recounted the story of the murder for our edification; the former enlarged on the discovery of the corpse and the value of the gold frame. Both were so zealous for our instruction, that what one omitted was supplied by the other, and frequently both talked away at the same time.

How strong the affection the Russians still feel for this last offshoot of the old Rurik dynasty, was lately testified by a gift made to the young martyr, by the inhabitants of Uglitsh, of a new silver podsvietshnik, a candlestick as tall as an ordinary man, with a profusely decorated pedestal and a thick flat top. On this top is a cavity in the centre for the reception of a thick wax-candle, with a number of smaller cavities around, for candles of different dimensions, according to pleasure.

A whole body must necessarily take precedence of a few drops of blood. Hence, a few drops of the veritable blood of John the Baptist, after he was beheaded, are little regarded, although set in gold, with diamond rays like the centre of a star. One would think that the blood of John the Baptist was immeasurably dearer to Christendom than that of this royal child; but in Russia the *Christian* religion is every where overshadowed by the *Russian*. The pictures of Paul, Peter and the other apostles, are seldom found, either in the churches or private houses; whereas, St. Vladimirs, Demetriuses, Nicholases, and Gregorys meet us hourly. Even the Saviour and Mary his mother must take a Greek or Russian title before they enjoy meet reverence. The Iberian Boshia Mater, and she of Kasan, are quite other godheads from the suffering Virgin Mary.

The Czars, down to Peter the Great (since whom the sovereigns have been buried in the fortress of Peter and Paul, at St. Petersburg), lie here. Their portraits, as large as life, are painted *al fresco* round the walls, each, wrapped in a white mantle, by his own tomb, as if watching it. These portraits are probably no more like the originals than is that of the Re-

deemer, with which St. Sergius blessed Demetrius Donskoi when he marched against Memai, and which is also shown here. They are all evidently made after one pattern, and that no very choice one. The tombs are nothing better than heaps of brick whitened over. On the walls and cover of the sarcophagi are inscribed the names and paternal names of the Czars, the years of their birth and death, in the following style:—"In the year of the world 7092, and in the year after Christ 1584, in the month of March, on the 19th day, departed the orthodox and Christ-loving Lord, the Lord Czar and Grand-Duke Feodor, the son of John, Ruler and General of all the Russians." While I was looking at them, one of the ecclesiastical officials, pointing to a small chapel near the altar, called out to me, "There lies the 'Terrible,' and his murdered son." The young priest led me into the chapel of the "Terrible," and related word for word how Ivan had slain his own son with his fatal iron-pointed staff. It is said that this staff, with which in his tyrant fury Ivan pinned to the ground the foot of the unhappy messenger who brought the news of the Sheremetieff's having deserted to the Poles, leaning upon it while he read the letter, is to be seen in the armory of the Kremlin. Elsewhere I asked in vain about this story; the answer was, "We know nothing of the weapon nor of the deed," while in the church no secret was made of the fact. This "orthodox and Christ-loving Czar and Father Jonas," (the name Ivan assumed, when, in his last hour, according to his pious wish, the monks had arrayed him in his robes,) now lies by his slaughtered son, as if nothing but love and tenderness had ever existed between them.

I was very sorry that my young guide to the grave of "Father Jonas" had not been with me before, as I found in him a most original specimen of the Russian clergy; he seemed mightily rejoiced to have found in me his equal as he thought, *i. e.*, a learned man. He made me acquainted with his whole *curriculum vitæ*; where he had studied, and how he might hope to rise from Diatschok to Diakon, to Pope, and Protopope. He insisted upon speaking Latin, although he heard that I spoke Russian. When he heard the name of my native city, he knew that it had a republican constitution, and he also showed that he could distinguish gold from silver and wood from iron; for as he showed me the pictures of the saints, he said half in Russian and half in Latin "*etto aurum, etto argentum, etto ferreum, etto ligneum.*" To this acquaintance with a Russian classical scholar, I owed that of the chapel of the Shuiski, which I should probably have missed otherwise. "*Dicas mihi rogo,*" I said, "*ubi famosa familia Shuiscorum quiescat?*" Enraptured with my learning, he ran off with the speed of one possessed, and came back directly with a great bunch of keys. "*Ibi, domine, claustra tibi apporto pro Shuiscorum ecclesia, quæ non multam ab hic distat.*" On my turning the wrong way, however, he broke out immediately into his Russian patois "*Niets! des I sdes ss!*" (Here! here, sir).

The emperors, who from private individuals have sat by usurpation on the Russian throne, are, Boris Godunoff, Vassili Shuiski, and the false Demetrius. In the cathedral of the Archangel Michael only the legitimate Czars, born in the purple, and of the race of Rurik or Romanoff, find rest. The three usurpers are excluded. Boris Godunoff was buried here, but his body was cast out by the false Demetrius, and lay for a time unburied in the Cathedral Place, till it was removed by the monks, whose friend and benefactor he had been, and placed in a chapel; whence it was



removed to the church of the Trinity, where it now rests. The second usurper met a worse fate. His body was burnt, and the ashes thrown to all the four winds of heaven. Shuiski, who had a better right than the other two, was less hardly dealt by; he was not indeed admitted into the church, but in a little chapel attached to it he has found a resting-place. In the inscription on his tomb he is styled Knäs and Czar; but not Velikoi Knäs or Grand Duke. His exploits against the Poles are mentioned perhaps to excuse the admittance of a usurper into the sacred ground of the church of the Archangel. His portrait is here also; evidently a very old picture, and probably a real portrait.

The French, as we say in Germany, left a "large ham in pickle" here on the Kremlin. The ravages exercised on the most honoured sanctuary of the Russians, are yet fresh in the memory of all. The priests repeated to me with deep emotion the story of the French stabbing their horses in the church of the Annunciation, and people from the provinces never hear this without shuddering, or swearing eternal hatred to them in consequence.

With the greatest good-will in the world, the French did not discover all the gold there. A rent was made with hammer and tongs in the frame of the Virgin of the Don, which is of pure gold, but they were smitten with blindness, and rejected it as copper. The priests would not allow the rent to be repaired, and show it triumphantly to strangers as a proof of the miracle. The golden cross that graces the centre cupola also escaped. The French had heard of a massive golden cross in one of the churches of the Kremlin, and supposed the great far-off glittering cross of the "Great Ivan" to be the right one. Napoleon caused it to be taken down, and convinced himself that it was made of wood, covered with copper gilt; while the real golden cross remained safely among his three mock brethren.

Thus the French twice exposed themselves to the ridicule of the Russians; once by rejecting gold as copper, and once by carrying off copper for gold.

The floor of the church of the Annunciation is paved with stones of all sizes and shapes; but the stones are all semi-precious, jasper, agate, and cornelians from Siberia. The royal seat of the Czars is of wood, covered with silver gilt, shaped like a sugar-basin, with a cover to match.

This little church is rich in relics of all the saints in the calendar. They lie in different little divisions in glass cases; a bone for every day in the year, but the cases are no longer covered with glass. The priests said that this glass caused too great an expense to the convent, none having yet been found that united the necessary transparency with sufficient strength; the throng of kissers was always so great on holidays, that the glass was broken every time, that they might bring their warm lips into contact with the sacred bones.

The most remarkable object in this church is the fresco painting on the wall. This is so singular in its kind, that a cool Lutheran temperament knows not how to take it. Here all the good and evil spirits seem assembled. From every cupola the thin faces of the Russian martyrs look down upon the space below. Goliah, Samson, Abraham sacrificing his son, the Jewish prophets and Christian apostles, are all jumbled promiscuously together, with the eagle, which is bringing the quills to John, the swine possessed by the unclean spirits and plunging into the sea, the

monstrous fish which finds out Jonas in the midst of all this turmoil and swallows him, and the four great monarchies represented with serpents' tails and dragons' teeth. But all these must strike their flag to the evil one himself, who stands to the left, lord of the infernal rabble-rout, as he lives and moves in his own kingdom, breathing flame and smoke, with an infernal spear in his hand, horned, hoofed, and tailed, as if the painter of Alexis or Ivan had taken a portrait of Zamiel in the *Freischütz*. This picture is quite incomprehensible to me, for of all things one would least expect to find the devil among all these holy pictures and relics. However, we must not be too hasty in what we deduce therefrom concerning the Russian character. On the whole I believe the devil plays no more important part with them than in our protestant bare white churches; nor is any greater power attributed to him by the Russians than is allowed him in many evangelical congregations of our fatherland.

Behind the coronation cathedral stands the house formerly belonging to the patriarchs of Moscow, now called the Synodalni Dom, because a section of the Russian Holy Synod has its offices here. It contains also the library of the patriarchs, their treasury, and their wardrobe; and in the church belonging to it is preserved the "*mir*," the holy oil that is used in baptizing all the children in Russia.

The old books are kept in glass presses in the church itself; and in the middle, round the pillar that sustains the vaulted roof, the vessels used in preparing and preserving the oil are ranged on semi-circular shelves. The priest crosses, with a small camel-hair pencil dipped in the oil, the mouth, eyes, ears, hands, and feet; the eyes that the child may only see good, the ears that they may only admit what is good, the mouth that he may speak as beseems a Christian, the hands that he may do no wrong, the feet that they may tread in the path of the just.

The holy oil, the *mir*, which is to answer all these difficult demands, is of course no common oil. The finest Florence oil is used, mingled with a number of essences, the quantity and quality of which are strictly defined, but the soul of the mixture are some drops from the oil-flask of the woman who washed the feet of the Saviour.

Two great silver kettles, the gift of Catherine II., are used for the preparation. Four weeks elapse before the mass is perfectly mingled, before the due number of prayers have been absorbed in it, and before, amid pious psalmody, every drop has been refined and signed with the cross. From the kettles, the oil is poured into silver jars, thirty in number, the gift of the Emperor Paul. These are sealed with the seal of the Synod, and placed on the stages round the central pillar of the church. The quantity made at once, about 20 vedros,\* supplies all Russia for a year and a half or two years. Every bishop either comes himself or sends a confidential person to Moscow, to fetch a supply for his diocese, and receives it from the metropolitan sealed with the seal of the synod. The cost of the whole is about 5000 rubles. Every thing employed in the operation is silver, as well as the kettles and the jars to keep it in, the sieve for straining, the spoons for stirring, &c. &c.

Among the patriarchs' books there are a number of rare Bibles in different languages, so inestimably precious, that they are always kept under lock and key, and shown to no one. Thus, in time, they will be eaten by the

\* A vedro is equal to about three gallons and a quarter.

worms without any person being the wiser. The four gospels, transcribed by the daughter of Michael, and sister of Alexis, are shown here. Every letter is carefully and beautifully painted. We shall hardly find in Germany such a monument of pious industry of so recent a date (160 years).

In the chambers of the patriarchal palace, the name of Nikon was repeated continually. Nikon was an artful ambitious man, who wore the mitre of the patriarch when the crown of the Czars rested on the head of a fat-bodied, feeble-minded, indolent prince, Alexis Michaelovitch. The latter was the friend of Nikon, because he was too weak to be his enemy; and for many years the crosier was mightier than the sceptre in Russia. Nikon's credit was at the highest after the conquest of the Ukraine, which was in fact his work. After its completion, Nikon did as he liked in the empire, and Alexis did all Nikon wished. A conspiracy of the nobles at last lost him the favour of the prince, deprived him of his employments, and drove him into the Bielosersk convent, where he had begun his career as a simple priest.

His apartments are now tenanted by the priest who showed us the rarities. They can scarcely be quite insignificant, since they were found large enough for the man who ruled one kingdom and conquered another, yet an insignificant pope complained of want of room in them.

#### PAKROSKI SABOR,

#### THE CHURCH OF THE PROTECTION OF MARY.

Ivan IV., called by the Russians "the Terrible," was certainly one of the most original monsters that ever walked the earth in the human form. In the Terema, in the highest room, which rears itself into the air like an eagle's nest, where he passed his youth, he practised his hand, by torturing animals. Of all the incredible deeds that are related of this tyrant, the most extraordinary is his putting out the eyes of the architect of the church which he built in gratitude to God for the conquest of Kasan. The Czar was delighted when this pearl and crown of all churches was finished. He ran about the building in raptures, examined every part, and declared that the architect had met his views completely. He had him called before him, pronounced a warm panegyric on the work, embraced him in thankfulness, and then ordered the man's eyes to be put out, that he might never build such another. One would expect that a building which enraptured such an original as Ivan, must be something extraordinary if not sublime; nor will any one be disappointed who enters it with this expectation. The ground on which it is built is extremely unequal. It stands close to the declivity with which the "Red Place" ends towards the Moskwa, not boldly at the point, however, but cowering like a beggar-woman, half-hidden, with one leg drawn up, and the other hanging down. On one side, the inequality is assisted by an artificial terrace, with a steep slope towards the Basaar; on the other, where that has not been done, the walls hang over the descent. On so perversely arranged a site, despising a very fine one somewhat further up, rises the church with its twenty towers, large and small cupolas and roofs, the whole strangely confused mass, forming one of the most singular objects in the world. Something similar may be seen when the clouds after a storm, are heaped around, and



all the seven classes of Göthe are lying one upon another. Dr. Schnitzler, in order to give us an idea of this church beforehand, took us into a cave of stalactites, and desired us to look at the formation. Or we might ascend some volcanic mountain with Humboldt, and look for the original of the Pakroski church amid the shattered points and extinct craters. The boiling crater in which the original was securely lodged, has long been silent. That crater was the head of Ivan the Terrible, wherein the skilful architect discovered his model, and made it manifest in wood and stone.

Every one of the towers of this church differs from the other in size and proportion, in shape and ornament. The whole is far from forming a whole; no main building is discoverable in this architectural maze; in every one of these hollow irregularities lurks a separate church, in every excrescence a chapel; or they may be likened to chimneys expanded to temples. One of the towers stands forth prominently amid the confusion, yet it is not in the centre, for there is in fact neither centre nor side, neither beginning nor end; it is all here and there. Strictly speaking, what I have just called a tower is no tower at all, but a church and the chief one in the knot of churches; *the Church of the Protection of Holy Mary*, properly so called. This tower, 150 feet in height, is quite hollow within, having no division of any kind, and lessening by degrees to the summit, from whose small cupola the portrait of the "protecting Mother Mary" looks down as if from heaven. This tower or church sits as it were upon the neck of another, hollowed out beneath it like the passage of a mine, from whose sides a number of chapels are sprouting: Palm Sunday Chapel, the Chapel of the three Patriarchs, of Alexander Svirskoi, and whatever else their names may be. Service is performed in these one day in the year only, all the rest of the time they are closed. The greater part are so filled up with sacred utensils and objects of adoration that there is hardly any room left for the pious who come to pray. Some have a kind of cupola that looks exactly like a turban, as if they were so many Turks' heads, from which Ivan had scooped the Mohammedan brains, and supplied their place with Christian furniture. Some of the stones of the cupolas are cut on the sides, others not; some are three-sided, some four-sided; the sides are sometimes smooth; some are ribbed, or fluted; some of the flutes are perpendicular, and some wind in spiral lines round the cupola. To render the kaleidoscope appearance yet more perfect, every rib and every side is painted of a different colour. Those neither cut in sides, nor ribbed, are scaled with little smooth, glazed, and painted bricks; and, when these scales are closely examined, they even are seen to differ from one another; some are oval, others cut like leaves. The greater part of the cupola-crowned towers have a round body, but not all; there are six-sided and eight-sided towers. In short, when from one of the upper galleries we look down on all the jagged and pointed confusion, we are inclined to believe we are gazing on a field of giant thistles, some half and some fully blown, that have sprung from antediluvian seed, and been changed to stone by the stroke of an enchanter.

To the lower churches the entrances are on the ground-floor. Between these entrances, from remote times, wax-taper sellers have established themselves, and there they display their gilded and many-coloured wares. From one corner we ascend to the upper churches, by a broad covered flight of steps, which beside a multitude of dead fir-trees is beset day and night with the living ones, customary in such places; namely, by hungry

beggars who look to be fed by the devout. These steps lead to a gallery or landing-place which branches off right and left to a labyrinth of passages leading to the separate doors of the temple on the roof. These passages are so narrow and winding, that it costs many a painful effort to work one's way through. In some parts they are convenient enough, and even expand into spacious terraces. Where they lead outwards they are of course covered, and their roofs are supported by pillars of different forms and sizes. Whole flocks of half-wild pigeons that build their nests here, are constantly flying in and out. Imagine then all these points and pinacles surmounted by crescents, and by very profusely-carved crosses, fancifully wreathed with gilded chains; imagine further, with how many various patterns of arabesques, every wall and passage is painted; how from painted flower-pots, gigantic thistles, flowers and shrubs spring forth, vary into vine-wreaths, wind and twist further till they end in simple lines and knots; imagine the now somewhat faded colours, red, blue, green, gold, silver, all fresh and gaudy, and you may in some degree comprehend how these buildings must have delighted the eye of so original a tyrant as Ivan the Terrible.

"I know not whether it be beautiful in your opinion, but we think it very beautiful; it is so rich, bold and magnificent, it is so distinguished, so various, and so ornamented," said the Russian pope, who was my guide; and thereupon he fell to pronouncing a panegyric on the church and its architect, such as Ivan himself may have pronounced before he put out the architect's eyes.

IVERSKAYA BOSHIA MATER,

THE CHAPEL OF THE IBERIAN MOTHER OF GOD.

At the foot of the hill ascending to the "Red Place," and by the "Sunday gate" (Voskressenskaya Vorota), the most frequented entrance of Moscow, the good "Iberian Mother" has posted herself directly before the massive pillar that divides the double gateway, with her front turned towards Beloi-Gorod.

Among the Iberians, whose country, the modern Georgia, gave birth to this Iverskaya Mater, her fame was cherished, and became great under the care of the Georgian priests. After passing her childhood in the deep valley of the Kur, she took shipping and followed the fleet of the Argonauts to Mount Afonsk (Athos), to which she took a great fancy. Who built the ship, or who steered it, whether it was Queen Tamara\* or any other royal personage, the Russian monks do not know, nor how long she made her abode in the cloister, which the Georgians founded on the mountain. From Mount Athos her reputation for miraculous powers spread so far, that the Russian Czar Alexis Michaelovitsh invited her to Moscow, and fixed her abode by the Voskressensk Gate.

Since then, in defiance of the rude climate, she has never ceased to carry on her Christian labours; she enjoys the greatest reputation not only in Russia, but throughout oriental Christendom—Armenians, Bulgarians, Walachians and Greeks bow down before her. "Yes, I believe even the Lutherans pray here," said the little monk with whom I stood gossiping

\* A female sovereign of Georgia, who converted a great number of the inhabitants of that country to Christianity.

one evening after he had extinguished the lights in the chapel: "*Vsàkoi narod vsàkoi narod!*" (Every people, every people pray here!) I was well pleased to go rummaging about with those worthy and tolerant folks, who believed that even the Lutherans prayed, because they themselves (the Russians) always make the sign of the cross on passing a Lutheran church. I carried a book for them, held the ladder for them sometimes when they were stowing away their curiosities, and reached up the candles; services which they readily received, bestowing upon me much good instruction in return.

This celebrated nestling-place of the "Iberian Mother" consists of one undivided area. She herself, however, is in a kind of sanctuary hollowed out at the further end. The immediate space in front is adorned with many pictures of saints, and filled with silver candlesticks, and other glittering ware. She sits in the half-darkened background, in the midst of gold and pearls. Like all Russian saints, she has a dark-brown, almost black complexion. Round her head she has a net made of real pearls. On one shoulder a large jewel is fastened, shedding brightness around, as if a butterfly had settled there. Such another butterfly rests on her brow, above which glitters a brilliant crown. In one corner of the picture, on a silver plate, is inscribed, *ἡ μήτηρ Θεοῦ τῶν Ἰβερῶν*. Around the picture are gold brocaded hangings, to which angels' heads, painted on porcelain with silver wings, are sewn: the whole is lighted up by thirteen silver lamps. Beside the picture there are a number of drawers containing wax tapers, and books having reference to her history. Her hand and the foot of the child are covered with dirt from the abundant kissing; it sits like a crust in little raised points, so that long since it has not been hand and foot that have been kissed, but the concrete breath of pious lips. The doors of the chapel stand open the whole day, and all are admitted who are in sorrow, and heavy laden; and this includes here, as every where else, a considerable number. I often beheld with astonishment the multitudes that streamed in, testifying the inordinate power which this picture exercises over their minds. None ever pass, however pressing their business, without bowing and crossing themselves. The greater part enter, kneel devoutly down before "the Mother," and pray with fervent sighs. Here come the peasants early in the morning before going to market; they lay aside their burdens, pray a while, and then go their way. Hither comes the merchant on the eve of a new speculation, to ask the assistance of the angels hovering round "the Mother." Hither come the healthy and the sick, the wealthy, and those who would become so; the arriving and the departing traveller, the fortunate and the unfortunate, the noble and the beggar. All pray, thank, supplicate, sigh, laud, and pour out their hearts before "the Mother." There is really something touching in seeing the most sumptuously-clad ladies, glittering with jewels, leave their splendid equipages and gallant attendants, and prostrate themselves in the dust with the beggars. On a holiday I once counted two hundred passing pilgrims, kneeling down before "the Iberian Mother;" and thought with astonishment of the importance of this little spot of ground. Since Alexis, the Czars have never failed to visit it frequently. The present emperor never omits to do so, when he comes to Moscow. It is said that he has come more than once in the middle of the night, and wakened the monks, in order that he might perform his devotions.

The picture is also, if desired, carried to the houses of sick persons.



For this purpose, a carriage with four horses is kept constantly ready, in which it is transported with pomp; not the real picture, hut a copy that hangs in the fore-chapel;—at least so said the attendants at the chapel; but others contradicted it, and said that the copy remained behind for passing worshippers, and the original was carried to the sick. The visit costs five rubles, and a voluntary present is usually made to the monks.

I had almost forgotten to mention the principal thing; namely, that there is a very little scratch in the right cheek, that distils blood. This wound was inflicted, nobody knows when or how, by Turks or Circassians, and exactly this it is by which the miraculous powers of the picture were proved; for scarcely had the steel pierced the canvass, than the blood trickled from the painted cheek. In every copy the painter has represented this wound, with a few delicate drops of blood. As I was speaking of this and other miracles to a monk, he made, to my imprudent question, whether miracles were now daily wrought by it, the really prudent reply, "Why, yes, if it be God's pleasure, and when there is faith; for it is written in the Bible, that faith alone blesses."

#### THE MOSQUE.

On the other side of the stone bridge, going towards the Tartar-street, we reach a portion of the city where the houses are particularly small and low, and the courts and gardens all the larger. In this quarter stands the small place of worship erected by the Mohammedans in Moscow.

As we found every place fastened when we visited it, we went first to the court of the Mollah who lives in the neighbourhood. Here we found as many vehicles and horses as in an inn-yard. The Tartars here, as in St. Petersburg, where they are so frequently employed as coachmen, are almost all of them charioteers of some kind. Driving seems to be their only business. In the court a number of little shavelings were playing about; for these people shave the heads even of children of three and four years old, leaving them as bald as dead skulls, at an age when with us they appear adorned with a beautiful profusion of curls. The dwelling appointed by the Mohammedans of Moscow for their chief, sufficiently indicated their poverty, of which the Mollah complained bitterly.

"There is no public spirit in the body," said he, "for there are no settled residents here. The community is in constant motion; the people do not look upon Moscow as their native land; and like better to adorn their mosques in the Crimea, or at Kasan, than one to which they are bound by no endearing associations." Every thing that surrounded the little thin-bearded Tartar Mollah fully justified his complaint. His house looked so ruinous, that we stood some time hesitating on the threshold before we accepted his friendly invitation to enter. On the walls nothing was to be seen but his thick white turban, for he was a Hadji, and had accomplished his pilgrimage to Mecca successfully. A little girl, whom he had been teaching to read, rose from the divan, and placed herself with her Arab A-B-C-book at the door. The Mollah told us that he depended on the Mufti of Orenburg, who, like the Crimean Mufti, stood directly under the authority of the emperor. These two Muftis, he said, were great personages, and held the rank of generals, while the Mollah

was one of the most insignificant of the Mohammedan lights. Among his books there were several interesting oriental manuscripts, so much the more interesting here, as they lay about upon the sofa and the table, like familiar household gods to be daily consulted. His Koran he took first from a covering of Russian fabric, then from a second covering of silk, and showed the book itself in a binding of real Cashmere shawl stuff. The less literature the Asiatics possess, the more valuable they esteem, and the better they are acquainted with it. He told us, there were about one hundred-and-twenty Tartars who are Sunnites, living in Moscow, and twenty-five or thirty Persians (Shiites). The latter have a small place of prayer in the house of a merchant, as the Sunnites have in St. Petersburg, and keep up no intercourse with the Tartars.

The assistant of the Mollah, his sacristan, who took us to the mosque, offered us some dressing-gowns for sale by the way. He was he said, a "dressing-gown" Tartar. He made use of the German word *Schlafrock*, and we wondered not a little, that a thing coming so far from the east as the Bokharian dressing-gowns, should have met its appellation from so far west: the word is in use throughout Russia.

The little building erected here to the honour of Allah, and whose priests are obliged to deal in dressing-gowns, which they must not wear themselves, had a predecessor which in 1812 met with the same fate from the French fire, in which so many Russian churches shared. The flock were long unable to get together the necessary funds for a new temple, till about twelve years ago, when a wealthy Tartar erected the walls that are now standing. It was not, however, quite completed, and has still only a temporary roof. It is not even whitewashed within, and so totally without decoration, that it must be called even uncomfortably simple. It is incomprehensible to me, that it has not yet occurred to any wealthy Christian here to perform the really Christian work of putting the temple of these poor Mohammedans into decent condition. The Tartars do not yet know, by experience, under what a noble religious influence they live. On the contrary, those who should be most imbued with Christian principles, have even robbed them of something—a beautiful carpet. The only point on which these poor people could not resist the inclination to incur expense, was for the carpets that cover the floor of the mosque. There are some of Russian fabric, but one came from Egypt over Constantinople, that cost them 3000 rubles, and had a fellow equally beautiful, which some Russians stole.

#### THE CONVENTS.

The convents of Moscow, about twenty-one in number, are situated, some in the interior and oldest parts of the city, and these are extremely confined in space; others in the meadows and gardens of the suburbs, with their walls embracing so many churches, buildings, gardens, and fields, and crowned with such numerous towers, that each looks like a little town. Within the walls of the Donskoi monastery there are six churches and chapels, a birch wood, several courts, and the dwellings for the Archimandrite and the monks. These lie in the usual order of Russian monasteries to the right and left of the entrance, close to the wall. The chief passage leads directly to the "Sabor" (chief church of the cloister); the other churches stand right and left of it, surrounded, like the Sabor, with graves.

A young monk, whom I met drawing water from a well in the court, was my guide. There is by no means so much life and amusement in the Russian cloisters as in those of the south, in Austria, the Tyrol, Italy, &c., where the good fathers sit together the whole day long, gossiping over their wine and cracking walnuts and chesnuts. Nor have they so many means of diversion, no billiard-tables for example, only ordinary halls and scanty libraries. The cold must tend greatly to repress activity, for it naturally causes people to take great delight in warmth; and to sit still, wrapped up in sheepskins, is the quiet monk's greatest pleasure. As I entered with my monk to look at his cell, four old monks were sitting huddled in sheepskins on the benches before the door, gaping about, but saying nothing; they made me no answer when I greeted them as civilly as I could, but let me pass on unnoticed.

The cell of my young father Yephim (Euphemius) was not badly furnished. He had two cells, one to sleep in, and one to sit in and receive company. On his table lay a heap of "*Literaturnaya pribavlenie*" (literary leaves), his only means for obtaining a peep into the world. I asked him if his way of life pleased him; he answered that he was not much charmed with it, but he remained there, "because whoever had once said A, must say B." The rules seemed very severe. The monks rose at three, and had enough to do in the course of the day. He had not been long here; he had inhabited another convent in Kostroma, and had left it because he preferred a convent in the capital. To quit the monastic life, though possible, is yet attended by many difficulties. If a monk wish to return to the world, he must submit his motives to the Archimandrite. For half a year the latter must seek to combat these; if he cannot succeed in convincing the discontented monk that a cloister is better than the world, or if his motives are plausible, such for example as having a mother to support, which he can do better by some employment exercised without the cloister, they are laid before the emperor and the synod, who alone can decide whether they are important enough to procure him a release from a conventual life.

## DEVITSHEI MONASTIR

## (MAIDENS' CONVENT).

I still remember with satisfaction the manner in which the good Saxons in Dresden used to show me the way. If I asked a direction, they would stand still, consider a moment, and describe it most exactly, or take me by the arm and go a part of the way with me, never resting till I thoroughly understood all about it. How characteristic this was of the thorough going Saxon, and how different from the Russians. I once asked the way to the Devitshei monastery, and received the answer "*Poshaluite tam dalshe*" (Be so good as to go further on), and the speaker swung his arm round in a way that might indicate either the right or left hand, as the proper direction; and this is their usual way of directing, not out of incivility, but from pure carelessness, and unwillingness to take trouble, so that we go away from such a guide as wise as we came. If you put the question so that they must answer yes or no, the reply is sure to be "Yes, yes, quite right." You rejoice to have guessed so correctly, go on, and are sure to go astray.

I got tired at last of asking, and was glad to take a droshky, where one



question did for all, and the answer was a deed. "Isvoshtshik na Devitshei monastir" (Drive me to the Devitshei monastery), "sluishu" (Ihear),—"Pasholl" (Go on).

The monastery stands at the end of the Devitshei-Pole (maiden's field), a large grass grown waste, without Semlanoi Gorod. The maiden's field is more interesting from its historical associations than its outward appearance. It is the field on which the Russian emperors entertain their subjects on the occasion of their coronation. In 1826, Nicholas had the tables laid here for 50,000 persons. On such an occasion it affords doubtless a more pleasing prospect than when on ordinary days one happens to be driving through it with an empty stomach.

On the walls that surround the monastery alone, there are sixteen towers; the principal church has, as usual, five small ones, others rose on all sides belonging to the supplementary churches and chapels, and a great tower for the bells was, of course, not wanting. The inner court of the cloister is charmingly adorned by him, who is in general no great decorator. The robber of all beauty, the annihilater of all form, the destroyer of all speech and colour—Death, shows in these courts so fresh a life of plants, such attractive colours in marbles and flowers, such consoling speech in texts and inscriptions, and such pleasing forms in urns and balustrades, that he appears here the most amiable gate-keeper in the world, as he invites us to enter his gardens. The departed lie thickly round the church, as if they would yet listen, as in life, to the songs of the nuns, and take part in the sacred ceremonies within, surrounding it with a far more graceful dance of death than the German painter has represented in Lübeck. Such thoughts passed through my head as I strolled about the courts of the monastery, waiting for the conductress I had requested from the *Igumena* (Abbess). While I was looking at the inscriptions, I heard keys rattling behind me; a black nun was standing at a little distance, and seemed to be waiting for me. I approached and greeted her in as friendly a manner as I could, but was almost frightened, as I came nearer, at the angry-looking figure which placed its two arms on its sides and addressed me thus: "Here, are you the person who has asked for the keys of our churches?" "Yes, fair lady, I should like to look at them a little nearer." She made no attempt to lead me to them, but continued in a tone of the utmost surprise: "And why, for God's sake, do you wish that. You are the third person who has asked that favour this spring. Like you, your predecessors had note-books in their hands, one even made drawings, and they were both Nyemtzi (Germans) like yourself. Have you no churches in your own country, and is not Moscow full of churches besides? What brings you so far out here? We poor nuns have a heavy service and plenty to do, and why should we wait upon you, who do not even pray in this church? How much do we get in the whole year? Four-and-twenty rubles, and that is all! What more we want, we must gain by the labour of our hands. We could not even exist but for those you are now looking at; the dead, I mean. They bring us the most, and are our only hope, since our rich possessions have been taken from us, particularly those who are buried near the 'sobor' (principal church), for that costs most; those that lie about the chapels pay less, and those by the walls least of all."

I interrupted this discourse by the necessary answers and remarks; told her that her cloister enjoyed a particular reputation; that I had learnt at school in my native city, three hundred (German) miles distant, that it

had been the retreat of the sister of Peter the Great, and that therefore I wished to examine it.

"Perhaps, sir, you are also working at the plan of Moscow that is making here, and for which they are drawing all the houses and churches," said another of the nuns, who were standing staring at us, and listening to our dialogue.

"A plan of Moscow! and what is that for? Mount our tower there, and you have the whole city before you; and what is the use of drawing what you have already?" returned Sister Eudokia, for so I heard the uncivil beauty was called. That she was uncivil my readers will themselves perceive; that she was a beauty I must answer for myself. She was really very beautiful: her straight Grecian nose, fair skin, bright colour, and pretty plumpness, were set off by her pretty nun's dress, and quick, open, saucy manner. She was one of those beauties that last longest, their attractions depending less on the quickly-vanishing charms of complexion and graceful fullness, than on symmetrical construction and feature—the finely-formed nose, beautiful arch of the forehead, regularly moulded chin, and graceful turn of the cheek.

There was nothing very worthy of note in the church, except the tombs of Peter's sisters, Eudokia and Catherine, and of the intriguing Sophia, who here transcribed the Gospels that are to be seen in the Uspenski Sabor. During her lifetime she inhabited the house now tenanted by the Igumena of the convent. I had hoped to have gleaned some characteristic anecdotes of a person so historically remarkable, but all my inquiries were vain.

My guide, Sister Eudokia, was lively and witty, and allowed scarcely a monument or church vessel that she showed me to pass without a jest—every one more or less a hit at my incomprehensible curiosity. As we came out of the church the bell sounded for prayers. "There," said she, "they are ringing, we must pray. You *can* pray, I hope?" "We do pray, certainly," said I, "but it is in silence." "Yes," said another, "they do pray, for I was once in their church in the Niemitzkaya Sloboda (German suburb), and I saw them."

"Is there also a Jesus Christ in your church?" "Yes, we have him also." "Why can't you pray, then, in our way? Shall I show you? See, you must do this;" and thereupon she made the sign of the cross in the Russian fashion, and invited me to imitate her. "Yes, you must do so," repeated the others laughing, as they crossed themselves, bowed down, and offered up their prayers. "Now, do it after us." Half forced by these nuns, who were here doing what could scarcely have been done in a Catholic country, I endeavoured to make the cross as they showed me. The thumb, the forefinger, and the middle finger of the right-hand must be held together; you then begin at the right-shoulder, passing over to the left, from that to the forehead, and thence down to the breast. I made a mistake of course at first, but tried over and over again till my teachers were satisfied. "There," said Sister Eudokia, "now, another time when you come into our church, make the cross properly, and pray like other people." As she talked to me without ceremony, I fell in love with her without ceremony—that is to say, for the time of my stay in the convent. As it was pretty evident that for the period of our union I should be under the lady's slipper,\* I did not venture to object when

\* To be under the slipper is a familiar German expression, corresponding with what in English is called petticoat government.

she said that we must mount the bell-tower, to look at the "Sparrow Mountains" and the meadows round the convent. The pleasure which this gave us both was of a very different character. She knew nothing either of the picturesque beauties that presented themselves as soon as we had ascended the first few steps of the tower, whence the whole landscape was divided into so many beautiful pictures, by the towers of the convent wall placed at regular distances, and affording between every two a separate view of rich meadows, with woods and buildings; nor of the magnificent panorama of river, hill, and valley, visible from the summit. She looked at them only in a practical point of view; told me how many men and how much cattle those fields and meadows could feed, what the convent had formerly possessed, what now remained to it, whom this and that field belonged to, and so forth.

The Russian convents are very tolerant; the monks may receive women, and the nuns men, probably under certain restrictions, with which I am not acquainted. It is certain that I subsequently found no corner in a Russian convent which I might not enter with the permission of the Igumena; and that in the male convents tea parties were sometimes given where women were present. I never heard that this freedom of intercourse led practically to a greater laxity of morals in Russian convents than in Catholic ones, where the severity is greater.

#### ANDRONIEVSKOI MONASTIR

(ANDRONICUS CONVENT.)

I had heard that the church of Martin the Confessor (Martin Ispovednik) was an elegant modern building, and that it might be compared to St. Paul's in London. Experience here again showed me how often low things are compared with high ones. There is no more comparison between them than between the Swiss Alps and the Waldavian swamp-hills; and if Moscow has in the church of Martin Ispovednik a St. Paul's, then every Russian village has in like manner its Horace, its Thucydides, and all the other great things in the world, into the bargain.

I thought to have seen in this church a specimen of Russian church magnificence in a new style, and was so provoked to find myself deceived, that when the disobliging servant of the priest told me that his reverence was asleep, and he could not give me the keys for the interior, I positively hated the place, and in my ill humour went directly to complain of the church and its rude servitors together to the Diacon Innokentie, whose name I saw on the door of a neighbouring house. I found the Diakon walking up and down his room. When I had made his acquaintance, and he had promised me his assistance to obtain an entrance to the church, he asked me to sit down. I saw many books in his room that had reference to the history of Russia; and after I had become a little calmer he showed me his library. He had a great many good books; among others, a Russian translation of the *Stunden der Andacht*,\* and Massillon's sermons in French, both of which he praised greatly. I found myself in this manner very comfortable with him, and forgot my anger with the church of the Confessor, the sooner when he assured me I might enjoy the fine view

\* A devotional work, which has for many years enjoyed the highest popularity in Germany, and of which the celebrated novelist Zschokke has lately avowed himself to be the author.



from the high banks of the Yausa just as well from the tower of the Andronicus convent and that I should have but a few steps further to drive.

As I found in the courts of the convent nothing particular but a few old monks wrapped in thick sheepskins, I went directly to the bell-tower. The tower-keeper, whom I asked to guide me there, showed himself quite a Russian of the common stamp. He brought me to the door, but even that hesitatingly and unwillingly. At the door he said, "There are the steps, take care how you go; mind you do not break your neck, for it is in a very bad condition." "Well, but you mean to go with me?" said I. "Why should I go with you for nothing, I have something else to do," answered he saucily enough. "Fool! dost think I shall not pay thee for the service? Come with me," returned I in a harsh and imperious tone; whereupon he took off his hat directly, and walked before, saying, "*Is-vinitye, moshet buit, ya oshiptza sdädal*." (Ah, forgive me, most honourable sir, perhaps I have done wrong. Will you excuse me?) All this meant that he thought he had perhaps offended some great person in me, and he became quite another man in speech and demeanour.

The view was as fine and picturesque, and perhaps more so, than any other in Moscow; the whole valley of the Yausa, rich in gardens, trees, and magnificent houses, lay at my feet. Two years ago there was a great fire in the neighbourhood of the convent, which destroyed four hundred houses and churches. All had already been restored, churches and all, with the exception of one house, which still lay in ruins; another sign of the fresh and healthy life of Moscow, for if the city had not possessed an abundance of vital energy, such a wound would not have healed so quickly.

#### TSHUDOFF MONASTIR

##### (THE CONVENT OF THE MIRACLE).

Towards evening I repaired to this cloister on the Kremlin, to see what wonders it might contain. In the corridor, as I entered, the old "Batiushkas," clad in black, were shuffling along to their cells. For centuries the good fathers must have trodden morning and evening in the self-same path, for I found the stones worn the whole way into a complete furrow. I swam with the stream, and got into a gallery of the cloister that looked over the court and gardens. Here stood some of the fathers, who had not gone in to mass. I contrived to hook myself on to them by means of my imperfect Russian, and we were soon on good terms. We leaned over the balustrade of the gallery and looked down into the court, surrounded on two sides by the convent and the church, and on the other looking out upon the old and the modern time, on sacred and profane, on the rude and the elegant, on the old tower of the "Spassgate," the yet fresh buildings of the "little palace," the towers of the Vossnesensk cloister, and on other edifices.

The monk with whom I had twined the thread of conversation was a man of about forty years of age, and had been only four years in the convent. Before that time he had been a secular priest in Vossnessensk, but having lost his wife, whose children had died before her, he had entered a convent. He said, "it is a melancholy thing to live alone as a priest. Here I have some society, and all sorts of little employments, which

occupy me out of the time devoted to religious duties." I learned from him the most important particulars respecting the convent. It is one of the oldest in the city, and has been from ancient times the seat of the metropolitan of Moscow. The present metropolitan, however, does not live in it, but in a magnificent house in Garden-street. He has done like the czar. The one has taken to himself a new capital, the other a new house. The convent too has declined. There are still thirty monks resident in it; eating and hungry monks, but not one is filled or satisfied.

I find nowhere more agreeable entertainment than within the walls of a cloister, whether it arises from a particular liking on my part for their silent courts, or because their galleries and gardens are in fact peculiarly adapted for conversation.

I stood long here with my good monk, who had as much objection to being alone as I had, and loved as I do the society of the cloister. He told me many things which I no longer remember, conversing rationally enough, till on some mention being made of miracles, he began all at once to recount a story of some saint's picture of Moshaisk, that betrayed all the child-like facility of faith, so peculiar to the Russians. The French, who in their *belle France* little dream of the many miracles they gave occasion to in the year 1812, were also in that little town which lies east of Moscow, and pointed their profane cannon at a picture which had till then been ranked among ordinary ones, but which on that occasion became all at once imbued with wonder-working power. The French, it was said, shot thirty-two balls at the picture, not one of which hit the mark, all remaining fixed round in a circle, "as may yet be seen." The violent concussion, however, struck off many fragments of stone, all of which the picture could not of course repair, as they were countless. Some of them struck the picture, and caused wounds whence blood flowed, which announced its miraculous quality. The trusting and naïve openness with which Russians repeat such stories as these to strangers, without the least reserve, wins our love, even while the superstition they display, calls up a smile upon the lip.

The good monk, whom I had plagued with my questions on my first visit, asked me to come again the next morning, when he would show me the *Risnitzi* (treasury) of his convent. I did not fail to go, and found him hard at work with a white apron over his black habit, and a large paste brush, pasting with the help of one of the church attendants, large sheets of paper together. They were hangings for some fresco paintings of the church, done in gay colours by a painter from Switzerland. How fortunate it would have been if the good father could have painted them himself! But these arts do not flourish here. The chief divisions of the cathedral are painted with scenes from the old œcumenic councils, in the order of time they were held. The first was in Nicea, the second in Zaregrad (Constantinople), the third in Ephesus, the fourth in Chalcedon, the fifth in Constantinople, the sixth and seventh in Nicea. How near I felt to the east, and how evident was that influence of the two beautiful peninsulas, Greece and Asia Minor, which pervades the whole history of Russia! It is scarcely possible to enter a church in Moscow, without hearing the east spoken of, particularly Zaregrad, the "imperial city." The Russians never speak of Constantinople under any other name. As they have their own name, so they have their own way of considering this city before which their barbarian forefathers fought,

and from which Christianity came to them, as the German races fought before Rome and afterwards received Christianity from her.

My good friend the monk had at last found the keys of the Risnitsi (treasure chamber), and we went there together. The door was as thick as the trunk of an oak-tree, the locks looked as if they had been forged from anchor iron, and of a form only in use in convents and churches. The Risnitsi is a little dark room, containing, in the first place, twelve Persian standards with silver hands, and several presses full of all kinds of costly objects; brilliant popochs, or long staves of the hierarchy and metropolitans carried at the coronation of the emperor, most magnificent mitres belonging to the metropolitans, with more precious stones than in the crowns in the Orusheinaya palata, and several "*Umnivalnitsi*," one in particular of gold, of Grecian workmanship. The *umnivalnitsi* are costly washing apparatus, in which the metropolitan washes his hands in rose-water, when celebrating divine service. One principal garment of these dignitaries is called a Sakos. One formerly belonging to Alexis is still here. He must have worn it in days when he was stronger than when he bestowed that blessing on Demetrius Donskoi, which gained the battle of Kulikoff over the Tartars, for it is as heavy with gold as the coat of mail of many a czar with iron.

The greater part of the things in this treasury date from Plato, the last celebrated metropolitan of Moscow, who enjoyed great credit under the three reigns of Catherine, Paul, and Alexander. Plato must have been a man of noble and cultivated mind; on the worthiness of no metropolitan are opinions more unanimous than on his, and he has left several highly-esteemed works, among others, a volume of excellent sermons delivered by him. Alexis and Nikon are the two main pillars of the church. A Bible, transcribed by the former, is bound in a net-work of pearl. Pearls are made great use of in the Russian Greek church. Not only whole books are sown, and pictures covered with them, but they form the trimmings of wide full robes and of large curtains. In the presses of this chamber I saw vessels full of pearls, sorted according to their size; the vessels were filled to the brim. In other respects the Risnitsi of this cloister is not so rich as those of the Archangelski Sabor, and that of the patriarchs. The richest of all is in the Troitski convent, in the neighbourhood of Moscow.

#### SA IKONO SPASSKOI.

The first reception of strangers by the hospitable Russians is generally so extremely courteous, that I could hardly believe my ears, when on asking permission to visit the "Sa-Ikono-Spasskoi" convent, to which is attached a school for young people destined for the church, the Otetz Rector (father rector), answered without ceremony, "*U nas Smatritelei ne nushno*," (We don't want visitors, I can't permit it). I had, as I thought, made my request so very courteously, and he had with such decided coldness thrown his refusal in my face, that on considering the matter with my usual philosophy, I could not help finding my position extremely comic, and had like to have betrayed my thoughts by a hearty burst of laughter. I restrained myself, however, and pretending not fully to understand him, replied with a smile, "No, that is not what I meant; I only wished if possible to see the library, and, if it did not cause too much disturbance, to pay a visit to the school, for which, as a sort of schoolman myself, I have a particular interest."



The Otetz Rector had by this time repented of his inhospitable speech, and so to turn my attention from his commencement, he invited me into his room, and said he would follow as soon as he had settled some business with a monk.

In this room I had time to have my laugh out, and then to look at the portraits with which it was adorned, before a pale friendly-looking man presented himself, to whom I took an immediate liking. He offered himself as my cicerone for the school of which he was the inspector, and entered forthwith into conversation, half in Latin, and half in Russian. I learnt that he was called Father Eusebius, that his employment was to overlook the school under the authority of the Otetz Rector, and that he had advanced so far in ecclesiastical dignity as to be Canonikus Hieromonach, which is the nearest step to an Archimandrite. His full address when written to was: "To the Inspector of the Sa-Ikono-Spasskoi Monastir, the Reverend Canonikus Hieromonach Pater Eusebius."

The pupils, of whom there are six hundred, are admitted in the sixth year and dismissed in the twentieth. When the course of study here is completed, they are according to circumstances and talent either placed in the lowest offices of the church, as Diakon, or sent to the academy of the Troitzkoi cloister, to pursue their studies further, and prepare themselves for the higher dignities. One hundred of the pupils live in the convent itself, the rest without the walls. The variety of costumes I saw in the classes was an agreeable appearance to me, every one dressed according to his own taste, and the military spatterdash service, the counting of buttons to be done or undone on coats and waistcoats, had not yet found entrance there. There are eight professors, all Russians. The library is said to be the best public library in Moscow, and consists of Greek, Latin, Russian, and German books. In the theological philosophical book-cases, I found Schelling's works, Neander's Church History, Cicero and Tacitus, and several copies of Luther's Bible. I was just coming out of the library with Father Eusebius when we met the rector, who invited me to attend the lesson he was about to give himself in the classes. He now looked quite a different person, his countenance was radiant with civility, and his toilette brilliant. Over his black dress his hair hung in the usual three clubs, one club principal behind, and one over each shoulder. Round his neck he wore a large gold cross set with jewels, and carried in his hand a long wand tipped with bright silver,—a real rector magnificus.

In such company it was no wonder if the professors served up the best they had to offer. However, having once squabbled with the rector, I soon withdrew with Father Eusebius into his private apartment, which differed little from that of a German of the same condition. I found there several theological works both by Catholics and Protestants, Luther's Bible again, and Niemeyer's, which he praised very much. I could not help expressing my wonder at the variety of the collection, to which he replied, "Oh, yes, we take the best from all;" which the fact proved in the best possible manner.

#### THE GREEK CONVENT.

I was one day as much out of tune as a damp lute, and the wings of my fancy were as little elastic as the wings of a bird when Jupiter Pluvius is descending from heaven. I wanted something to excite me, and flew to the five monks of the Greek convent in Kitai Gorod in search of

consolation. The convent is small, with one small gallery surrounding a narrow court, in the midst of which stands the church. I stood a while in this gallery talking in a loud tone to the Russian servant, in the hope that curiosity would allure to me some of the fathers, with whom I might have a little conversation. I was not deceived in my expectation; in a short time a black Greek eye sparkled at the door.

"There is Father Arfael (Rafaele) peeping out," said the Russian; "he can tell you all better than I can." And accordingly with Father Arfael, I contrived to keep up a dialogue which doubtless must have been a very comical one to any third party, on account of the bad Russian in which we were both obliged to spell out our ideas to one another. After I had introduced myself as a foreigner and explained what I wanted, he began to question me about my native city and my kindred. When he heard that I had a mother, sisters, and brothers, he took me to task for "travelling about out of mere curiosity, when I ought to stop at home, to sweeten the declining life of my mother, instruct my brothers, and get my sisters married, for all this was the duty of a young man of my age; and before all curiosity and all knowledge, honouring and cherishing a mother should have precedence."

I held it my duty to submit to all his questions respecting my social relations, because I meant to demand the same from him; yet I endeavoured to turn by degrees the conversation from the narrow streets of my paternal city to the airy heights of Mount Afon (Athos), which is more celebrated and more spoken about in Russia, than Olympus is in Greece. This convent is an offshoot of the Iberian convent founded by the Georgian czar son Mount Athos.

This convent shelters five monks and an Archimandrite, who are relieved by new comers every five years, Father Arfael had held out four, and thought the fifth would soon be over, when he would return to his cell on Mount Athos, where the stove would not be the chief piece of furniture in the room, and where it would not be necessary to cover the winter church with the summer one to keep it warm. The object of this convent is to minister to the two hundred Greeks resident in Moscow.

I expressed my sorrow to my Mount Athos friend, that he was still under the Turkish sceptre instead of belonging to liberated Greece, but I found him of quite a different opinion. "It was much better as it was," he said, "and he and all his brethren were glad that they were to remain in the old way. The king of Greece was a papist, which was worse than being a Turk. The Greek king ought to have done as the Russian empresses did, and adopt the religion of the people, which was a right and reasonable proceeding!" Nothing could exceed his contempt for the little Greek kingdom, and I found this way of thinking universal among the Greek clergy in Russia: those Greeks, on the contrary, who were military men, seemed very desirous of entering the Greek service, and showed no such preference for the Turks.

Father Arfael invited me afterwards to rest myself on the cushions in his cell; and there I was obliged to relate something concerning the great theatre, which stood not far from his convent, and whose interior was an object of great curiosity to him. He had never been so far from the walls of his place of shelter. His cell was adorned with pictures of the Iberian cloister, done partly in Moscow, and partly in Venice; his Greek books had likewise been printed in the two cities. Over his door a cross was painted,

and at the head of his bed a text, teaching contempt for all temporal, and reverence for all celestial matters. He had chosen the text himself, as all are wont to choose one, for the heads of their couches, and, moreover, he preached upon it for my benefit. "All things in this world were vain, and man the vainest. He and all else were but dust. Man should meditate on this day and night, and never loose sight of it. To-day man was here, and to-morrow he was gone. So was it with all men, but with him particularly, as he was suffering under a liver complaint and might soon expect death." This I should never have perceived in him, but I rejoiced to hear that he made so good a practical use of the holy doctrine. I read with him some consoling passages from his Greek Bible, on which we conversed, and I left him in the twilight, cheered and comforted by religious views. Although I was quite in the mood to stay the year out with Arfael, and then withdraw with him to Mount Athos, there to await my happy end, yet as there was still much in the world that was new and interesting to me, I thought I might as well postpone my retirement, till I had seen what there was to be seen.

#### DIVINE SERVICE IN THE RUSSIAN GREEK CHURCH.

A man must feel all the wants of a poor Russian seminarist, who wishes to become a pope, or love idle ceremonies as much as a Russian Greek Christian, who is never tired of church-going, to desire an acquaintance with all the services which the fancy of the priests and the people have invented for the collective 365 saints in the year, and for the adornment of the numerous interesting moments in the life of a man of seventy years of age, from his birth to his death. Something concerning them, however, is necessary to be known by a generally well-informed person; we will endeavour, therefore, to give some account of them, which may be the less unwelcome as they have been generally overlooked by travellers. Let us begin with the birth, or rather with what immediately follows it, the baptism.

This office of the church follows the birth so quickly, according to the Greek ritual, that the mother cannot be present, and as it is supposed that the father is employed in cherishing and comforting his wife, neither assist at the baptism of their child. A male and female friend take their places. Some great patron is usually asked to be godfather. Should the emperor and empress, while on a journey, be in any town within whose walls a child has just been born, the parents have a right to request their emperor to be godfather, which is seldom refused, and his majesty has probably a larger number of godchildren within his empire, than any of his subjects.

As the child, so long as it is unchristened, is a little heathen, and as such a subject of the evil spirit, the priest's first address to it is a demand that it will renounce him, "*Atrekaissa a diavola*" (Renounce the devil). As the child does not answer, the godfathers do so for him, and then,—and a very odd thing it is to see,—the priest *spits* behind him, and all those present follow his example; they spit at the retreating devil! This is the first act of the baptism. As an interlude, the priest offers up a prayer, and if he has brought singers with him, they sing. During this time, the child is in a neutral condition, and it is in fact hard to say to which kingdom his soul belongs. The evil spirits have left him, but the good have not yet taken possession. I never could learn what the priests think on this



point. Perhaps they admit a middle state, or purgatory. At any rate lie hovers a tolerably long time between heaven and the lower world; but whatever the somewhat extravagant fancy of the elders may choose to suppose his condition to be, blessed or unblessed, the little one cries or smiles philosophically through all. Before the immersion, the whole party, preceded by the priest and the godfathers, make a solemn procession round the font; this is repeated three times in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Then the priest consecrates the water, and puts a metal cross into it; and afterwards immerses the child three times, again in the three sacred names; and lastly pronounces the baptismal name bestowed on him.

With respect to the name, the custom varies in different parts of Russia. The great, of course, bestow what names they please; but in some places the peasants must take the name of the saint on whose day the child may happen to be christened. In others, they may choose between the saints for eight days before, and eight days after the birth-day. Sometimes, and this is most frequently the case, the priest, whose counsel is always asked, gives the name. No Russian has more than one name. This custom rests upon the belief that each name has its representative in heaven, who is the guardian angel of all those bearing that name. It is impossible, therefore, they say, that any one should bear two, because he cannot have two protecting angels; that is, he cannot serve two masters. After the third immersion, the child is a Christian, as the visible sign of which, the priest suspends a small metal cross to the neck by a black string, and this is kept on the breast as an amulet through life. It is then dressed; the procession round the font repeated, this time the godfather carrying the child, instead of the godmother; burning tapers are carried before them, whose flame is always held to symbolise the Holy Spirit in the Russian church; they must not, therefore, begin to flame, till the child is supposed to be filled with that spirit. The child is then anointed on the body, eyes, ears, mouth, hands, and feet, with the before-mentioned mir, or holy oil. Lastly, from four places on its little head, the priest cuts cross-wise a piece of its silky hair. Unfortunately I never could learn the signification of this hair-cutting. It is rolled up sometimes with a little wax into a ball, and thrown into the font.

#### THE MASS.

No stranger who wishes to become acquainted with the spirit of this people, will omit to be present at the mass celebrated on Sundays and holidays, with the administration of the sacrament. As it is the chief act of divine service for fifty millions of people, and contains much that is characteristic of the people, we will endeavour to give a faithful account of it.

Simple as it might appear at first, the priests have made so many additions to the ceremony, that a perfect mass, as performed by monks in the leisure of the cloister, lasts three or four hours. In the ordinary churches, where much is abridged and hurried over, it is still long enough.

When the congregation is assembled, a diakon comes through one of the side doors of the ikonostas, and placing himself in front raises the extremity of a long, broad, gold-embroidered ribbon that hangs over his shoulders with the left-hand, and proclaims aloud, "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, divine service is beginning." For

this service they select if possible a gigantic figure with a stentorian voice, that resounds all over the church. Immediately afterwards, the herald, in the same picturesque attitude, with elevated hand, announces in the name of what persons they are dividing the bread for the holy ordinance. In the name of our Lord and most gracious Emperor Nicholas Paulovitch. In the name of our Empress Alexandra Feodorovna. In the name of the whole imperial house. Of the state, of the military, of the civil orders. In the name of all orthodox Russians, and of all our Christian brethren.

The Bible is then brought out. The diakon, followed by two attendant diatshoks, holds it on high, allowing only the under edge to touch his forehead. He kisses the book and lays it down on a desk that stands before the "royal" or centre door of the ikonostas. This is no easy work, as the Bibles in Russian churches are enormously large and heavy. As we have before seen, some of those in the churches on the Kremlin are so laden with gold and jewels, that it requires two men to carry one Bible. One of the priests then reads an endless lesson from the scriptures. This reading, which should be the most edifying part of the service, is gabbled over so rapidly, that the reader gets completely out of breath every minute, and not a soul can understand a single word, while the unmeaning part of the proceeding, the announcement, the bringing forth of the book, the opening and shutting of the doors, and such like matters, are performed with the most stately and picturesque slowness. I remarked this once to a priest, and asked him why they read with such frantic haste. "Ah, Batiushka," answered he, "we must make haste! There is so much to do! We should not otherwise have finished in half a day." The reader is frequently interrupted by the choir, with the constantly repeated words "*Gospodi pomilui*" (Lord, have mercy). This interruption, if somewhat monotonous, is yet beautiful and melodious, and far more pleasing than the everlasting pitiless tinkling of the choristers in a Catholic church. It is not quite so agreeable when the reader himself sometimes breaks in with "*Gospodi pomilui*," which he repeats thirty-six or forty times in one breath.

During this time the high-priest who conducts the whole ceremony, is constantly employed mysteriously at the altar, it is not very evident with what. As the "royal" door of the Ikonostas is always made of some open carving, behind which a vapour-like half-transparent veil hangs, the high priest is perceived through it, continually moving backwards and forwards, and the stage, like the action, is a double one, half public, and half concealed. When all is ready the second act opens.

As the preparation began with a powerfully spoken announcement, the transubstantiation commences with a beautiful psalm, agreeable to hear everywhere, but, as sung in the cathedrals of the capital, a high enjoyment. The royal door then opens and displays to the people the decorated altar and splendid interior of the sanctuary. At the same moment the side-doors open and forth come the whole body of officiating priests bearing the bread and wine, a diatshok preceding them with a burning taper. Then comes the high-priest with a silver chalice, followed by another with the salver on his head. They stand in this disposition before the "royal door," and the diakon pronounces aloud a prayer for the imperial family. The priests then return to the sanctuary through the royal door, and singing "*Ishe Cheruvimi*," place the elements solemnly upon the altar, where the transubstantiation is to take place. The high-priest

kneels down and reads many prayers to himself, to supplicate God's assistance in the consecration of the bread and wine.

In the meantime the diakon takes his former position as herald, and calls or sings with a loud voice, "Depart, ye unbelieving, that no infidel may remain in the church. We believing *faces*\* will then supplicate the Lord for his peace."

This ceremony probably comes from the olden time of Christianity, when Heathens and Christians were yet mingled in the cities of Greece. Any Jews or Mohammedans who may happen to be in the church must then go out, as they dare not be present at the solemn moment of transubstantiation. Immediately afterwards the diakon begins the long peculiar prayer: "We supplicate thee, Lord, for the salvation of our souls; For the purity of the air; For the increase of fruits; For the freedom of captives; For welfare of travellers; For the healing of the sick. We pray for our parents, for our brethren, for our children; For the congregation here assembled, and for those who are not here. Gospodi pomolimsa! Gospodi pomolimsa! Gospodi pomolimsa! (Lord, we supplicate thee)." To this general prayer a special prayer is added for the imperial family and the state: "For his imperial grandeur, our great lord, the lord Nikolai, the son of Paul, absolute sovereign of all the Russias; O God, we pray thee, for his consort our Empress Alexandra, Frederick's daughter;" and so they go through the whole imperial family, naming every one separately, not omitting our good Duke of Saxe Weimar, who little thinks that thousands of prayers are daily offered up for him, even as far as America and Kamtshatka.

When the high-priest's private and the diakon's public prayer is ended, the former advances solemnly, while the choir sing a psalm, and blesses the chalice containing the wine. "Vladik," which may be best translated, Rabbi, master, "bless this vessel." The diakon then demands the same blessing for the bread which is shaken into the wine in the chalice, with the words, "*Blagosslovei obei*" (bless both). The moment of this blessing is that of the transubstantiation. In the same instant the priests prostrate themselves at the foot of the altar, the congregation make endless signs of the cross, and kiss the ground repeatedly, and all the bells of the church burst forth at once, that the occurrence may likewise be solemnized beyond the church walls by prayers. But all this clamour destroys most cruelly all enjoyment of the fine psalm sung at the same time by the choir.

The royal door of the Ikonostas opens once more, and the concluding act, the partition of the sacramental bread, takes place. The words, "Draw near in the faith and fear of God," are addressed by the high-priest to those who mean to communicate, and holding the chalice in his hand he prays, "Grant, O God, that we have made a true confession. Forgive us those sins we have unconsciously committed; Grant that we receive the sacrament, not to our condemnation, but to our preservation, that we may kiss thee not as Judas, but as the thief, and say: I hope to be with thee in Paradise." The communicants then approach one after the other, kneel three times, and hold their hands crossed upon their breasts. A morsel of the bread steeped in the wine is then put into the mouth with

\* Literally translated.



a small silver spoon. They kiss the chalice, in which generally a number of saints' pictures are set, kneel once more, and depart.

The main object is now achieved; but as this was approached by degrees the finale must also be harmoniously reached by as many cadences.

This finale consists of another long prayer for the state, the purity of the air, increase of flocks and herds, and so on, partly spoken and partly sung, and another reading from the Bible. The concluding blessing is given by the high-priest, generally an old man with a feeble voice, in the names Of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; Of John the Baptist; Of Joseph and Anna. Of the Bogorodiza (Mother of God;) Of the Saints of the Day; Of St. Anthony, St. Michael and Nicholas, and all other miracle-working *dwellers in caves* (hermits).

The cross-making congregation may now retire, but it is at least another half hour before the priest and his assistants are released, particularly when the metropolitan, or a bishop, officiates. There seems no end of the dressing and undressing, the mutual service and kissing, the blessing and greeting, kneeling and crossing. When the bishop has at last assumed his ordinary dress and advanced to the door, where his coach-and-four have long awaited him, a carpet is spread there, and choristers and burning tapers stand ready for the "door-prayer" to be said. Compared to this truly oriental fancy in the invention of ceremonies, our Roman oriental imaginations are mere children. The most disagreeable part of the Russian service is the astonishing inactivity of the congregation. The only thing done by them during this whole three hours' ceremony, is repeated crossing and touching the floor with the forehead. The latter ceremony makes a peculiar impression on a foreigner, particularly when he sees it joined in by the highest dames. They have no books in their hands either to follow the reading or the singing; they are merely spectators, and the whole service a pompous spectacle. There is nothing to enlighten the mind, or awaken perception; nothing to better the heart or rouse up the slumbering conscience. Of course my meaning here refers to the manner in which the priests have arranged the matter, for I am far from denying all true religious feeling to the Russians. Many come to the church with the best intentions, and are there actuated by a higher spirit. Most singular it is, that the people never grow weary of this spectacle; that an inattentive person is never seen, much less a sleeping one, a sight common enough in our Protestant churches; and this is precisely the most consolatory fact, as it proves that the people connect some nobler ideas with that which the priests have rendered a mere show. Let the attempt only be made to give the Russian public, year after year, the same spectacle of any other kind, and the players would very soon have to play to themselves!

#### CHURCH MUSIC.

The most beautiful part of the Russian divine service, which none who is not devoid both of ear and heart, can listen to without emotion, is the singing. It can scarcely be praised enough. Fortunately the Greek church does not admit instrumental music, and cannot therefore fall into the error of our Catholic churches, where violins, drums, and trumpets, sometimes drive all piety out of the temple, by the profanest of all music. Unfortunately, however, the sublime organ is also banished. The Russians

often envy our organ, and express a wish that it could be admitted into their churches.

We are far from meaning to compare the Russian Greek church music, on the whole, with the Roman Catholic. That would be as senseless as to place the sweet murmurs of the Æolian harp on the same level as the full swell of a complete orchestra. The Russian church melody can never obtain the high perfection attained by that of the Catholics, and if on the one hand some musical absurdities, or at least what appear such in a place of worship, are avoided in Russia, on the other hand, Russian church music never can rise to the sublimity and inspiration which, in some of the Catholic psalms, unite in the Creator's praise. There is no degree, no variety in it; all is a sweet, harmonious murmur. A "Creation," a "Last Judgment," a "Requiem," could never find birth in Russian church music. How, indeed, could a gentle child conceive such mighty thoughts? It is like the monotonous whisper of the brook set to music. The chief part turns on the words "*Gospodi pomilui*" (Lord, have mercy), "*Gospodi pomolimsa*" (Lord, we pray thee), "*Padai Gospodi*" (Grant this, O Lord). With these words the singers continually interrupt the prayers of the priest. The different modulations of the melodies on these few words form the chief study of the Russian choristers; during a many-hours' service they are only occasionally varied by a psalm or two, and a prayer for the emperor. There is a particular institution in St. Petersburg for the instruction of singers for the imperial chapel. The last director is said to have been a composer of distinguished merit, and he is looked upon as the founder of the new style of church music. The institution instructs about one hundred youths, from the ages of seven to eighteen, who are to supply the vacancies as they arise in the imperial chapel, and the demand is said to be very considerable, either because the Russian male voices are soon worn out, or because the style of church singing quickly injures them. Every Saturday during the winter there is a rehearsal of what is to be sung in the chapel next day. Some other choice morceaux are usually added, to make up a concert, at which there is always a numerous auditory, as it is easy to get tickets. At these rehearsals it is not alone the pupils of the institution who are heard, but all the men belonging to the chapel likewise assist. The extremes of the ages are seven and forty years. They are extremely fastidious with the men's voices. So soon as a bass shows the slightest mark of decay, he is pensioned off.

It requires some little time to get thoroughly used to things altogether new and foreign to us. We see every thing individually at first, and cannot seize the whole connection. A longer abode in a foreign land is necessary to enable us to see the threads that produce the web, the sources whence the different rivers flow. We understand Russian church music better, the more we know of the people, and the more we have sounded the original channel of the national character from which it is drawn; their national songs, their horn music, their Balalaik tinkling, are all of them the offspring of the same stock.

Female voices are never heard in the Russian churches, their place is supplied by boys; women do not yet stand high enough in the estimation of the church, or of the people, to be permitted to sing the praises of God in the presence of men.

It is a great point in a Russian church to have a few good bass voices; considerable expense is incurred on their account, the best voices being

everywhere sought for and liberally remunerated. They are not exactly for the choir, but for certain half recitative solos, occasionally required in the service, and which must always be delivered—such is the law or the custom of the church—by amazingly strong and deep bass voices. To such solo parts belong the prayers for the emperor, the warning to the unbelievers to depart, the cursing of the heretics, the opening of divine service, and so forth. In the ordinary churches, the harmony of the voices is less considered than their strength, and in such places voices may be heard, fit only to frighten children in our part of the world. The Russians have in general very deep and rough voices, somewhat refined, indeed, and modified among the upper classes. It may, therefore, be imagined what gigantic organs are sometimes brought forward, where the priests give themselves all possible trouble to strengthen and cultivate the depth and roughness of their singers.

A short time ago the Russian journals gave a sketch of the most distinguished bass voices in the empire. The compass of each was mentioned. The Kasan church had the finest bass, the church of the archangel Michael the second, Nishney Novgorod the third, and Kharkoff the fourth in excellence. The above-mentioned distinguished bass of St. Petersburg was formerly a merchant in Tobolsk, where he remained till the stories told of the power of his voice procured him a call to the Kasan church, which, allured by the large salary, he accepted. When having received some musical instruction, he officiated for the first time in the church, and thundered out the anathema against heretics, several ladies were carried fainting out of the church. They say that if he meets a friend in the street to whom he has something to say, he need only utter a stifled "He Ivan," to bring his friend trembling to a stand. To open the doors through which he has to pass, he never uses his hands, he hems only, and the doors spring open of themselves. It is seriously asserted that his voice once saved his life, and put a party of robbers to flight. He was travelling from Tobolsk to Orenburg, when, having lingered behind his companions, he was attacked by a party of marauding Kirguises, and thrown to the ground. They were about to murder him, when he uttered so tremendous a sound in calling for the cossacks who had rode on before him, that the Kirguises, never doubting they had something more than a man under their knives, galloped off with as much speed as if a whole infernal legion had been in pursuit of them. Thus the voice preserved itself for the musical world; and now, the better to cherish it, the owner feeds it half the year upon eggs.

#### THE CURSING OF THE HERETICS.

The most extraordinary, incomprehensible, and terrible service of the Eastern Church, is the cursing of heretics, political as well as religious, which I had an opportunity of hearing in St. Petersburg in the winter of the year 1837.

I had before heard that such a thing would take place, and on the 7th of March there appeared an extraordinary throng of orthodox believers, besieging the entrances of the Kasan church. A piquet of gendarmes had enough to do to keep order, and admit only the decently clad part of the public into the building. It was nevertheless full to suffocation. The anathematising began with a long service, with singing, reading, opening and shutting of doors; lighting of tapers, and burning of incense;



coming and going, &c. The venerable metropolitan officiated in person. A priest then appeared, and gave an explanation of the peculiar object of the day's service.

After this introduction, the mighty bass before mentioned stepped forward and called down anathemas upon a number of people; on the false Demetrius, on Boris Godunoff, Mazeppa, Senka Rasin, and Pugatsheff; and after these political heretics followed the religious ones, but they were only mentioned in general terms. Each person or class was first characterized by a few introductory words, their names pronounced, and then followed two or three times, like thunder after lightning, the word, "*anàfema, anàfema.*" Immediately a beautiful choir of pretty boys took it up after a melody so sweet and graceful, that it would much better have suited the words, "See the heavens how smiling," or some other pretty lay. It is seldom that a melody is heard so singularly in contrast with the words it accompanies. The bass then began the cursing anew. With Boris Godunoff, who though an illegitimate, was a good ruler, and well inclined to the priests, there was a distinction made. "For the good he wrought may he enjoy the heavenly blessing. For the evil, *anàfema, anàfema.*" The people manifested much interest in the ceremony, and every time a name was pronounced that those at a distance could not hear, there arose a murmur "Who was it? who was it?" "Mazeppa, Mazeppa." Directly after the last anathema, followed a prayer for the whole house of Romanoff, and all the princes issuing from it from the time of Michael and Alexis; a blessing was called down upon them, and, in the same way as after the anathema, the amen was repeated by the choir. It may be easily imagined that the whole lasted a pretty long time, as there was a regular enumeration made of all the good and evil that have appeared in Russian history for the last 250 years. I could not learn whether the religious heretics were distinguished, in kind, whether the Catholics, Lutherans, and others were named separately or not, or whether the commination had reference only to those condemned as heretics by the Nicene Synod. In the latter case, the ceremony is not of much importance, as those heretics are turned to dust and ashes, and have been forgotten long ago, and therefore the matter can only be considered as a dead and unmeaning form descended to us from ancient times. I say "dead," in a religious point of view, for as a political act it has life and influence. If the cursing have really reference to the Catholics and Reformers, as many maintain it has, it is not easily reconcilable to the apparent toleration of the Russians; if it has been transmitted, as others again say, "from the time of the image-breaking," it becomes more and more intelligible why the political rebels came to be mingled with the others.

This is the only occasion on which any thing like general cursing is to be heard in Russia, where, it must be confessed, the people are on the whole much more inclined to bless. Merciful heaven, what in Russia is not blessed, consecrated, crossed, and sprinkled? The houses, the stables, the branches in spring, the fruit in autumn, the Easter food, the flocks, the water, the air, in short all the elements, and every thing that lives and moves, or whose wellbeing at all concerns man. The Russians consider us to be heathens, living as we do in unconsecrated houses, even as we are apt to look on those who neglect to have their children christened. No Russian would hold it possible that his flock could thrive, if it had not received the priestly blessing in spring, and in autumn to eat apples before

they had received the like blessing, would be held by every one as a deadly sin. On that ground whereon the priest with his holy water has not passed, the devil has his special dwelling; in short it is the fixed belief of a Russian, that what the cross, the saints pictures, and the formula of benediction have not appropriated to Christianity, is of an unchristian nature, and in possession of evil spirits.

#### CONSECRATION OF THE WATER.

The consecration of the water, called also the Jordan festival, is particularly interesting. It takes place three times in the year, once in winter on the ice, once in spring, and once in the middle of summer. In Dorpat, a German maidservant once invited me most earnestly to attend this festival in these words: "To-day is Jordan, the gods are to be washed." The lower order of Germans generally honour the pictures of the saints with the name of "gods," and have taken it into their heads, that the pictures are washed, and thus consecrated by the water, whereas it is the water that is blessed by the immersion of the pictures. The winter ceremony is the most peculiar. On this occasion, on a river of the city, or if there be none, as in Odessa for example, on a neighbouring lake or pond, a circle is marked off on the ice, and surrounded by a gallery, and by birch-trees. In the midst of the circle, a square hole is broken; the priests come from the principal church in solemn procession, with tapers, flags, and pictures, enter the birch arbour, and begin the service with incense and singing, which has a curious effect when issuing from these bowers. With a multitude of ceremonies, a cross is then dipped several times into the water which is thus made wholesome, healing, and pure, for man and fish. And this consecration holds good not only for the water that splashes through that ice-hole, but for the water of all the springs and rivers, and all the wells in the neighbourhood. The people, however, who during the proceedings are picturesquely grouped on the high banks of the river, and the roofs of the surrounding houses, believe in the peculiar power of that particular water touched by the cross; and rush down with bottles, jugs, pails, decanters, and pots, as soon as the priests come out from their temporary bower, as if they thought to catch the particular wave the cross had touched. With noise and quarrelling, jesting and shouting, they fall upon the water; some contenting themselves with a bottleful, to carry home to drink, or wash their eyes with in the morning, while the more zealous stretch themselves along the ice, and dabble in the water like so many ducks after rain. That the north wind whistles sharply all the while, freezing the water on hair and skin, does not at all trouble them, for it is *holy* water. The boys who are sent by their parents to fill their green bottles, seem to take great pleasure in drinking, pouring it over their heads and then filling again. When all the tumult is over, a couple of patriarchal-looking figures will seat themselves near the hole, and drink with as much edification and content as if it were a bowl of punch they were discussing.

One of the prettiest of the festivals of this description is,

#### THE BLESSING OF THE FRUIT.

This falls on the 6th of August, and offers such a spectacle as the festival of Pomona may once have offered. I saw it to great advantage at a consi-

derable convent in New Russia. A countless number of vehicles, peasants' carts, kalesches, one-horsed carriages, and teams of oxen, filled the gardens round the cloister. Before the lofty doors of the minor courts and flower-gardens, files of fruit-sellers had placed themselves to supply such of the faithful as had brought no fruit from home. When the service was over, they placed themselves in double lines in the church, and those who could not find room there, drew up outside the line, stretching far among the flower-beds and tombs of the cloister-gardens. The priests then passed along the lines, sprinkling all with the healing moisture. Those who are very strict touch no fruit of any kind till this blessing has been conferred. When it is over, there is a general demolition of apples, pears, plums, &c. The children may then eat as much as they like, even infants at the breast have great apples given them, as if what had once been blessed could do no harm. The people walk in and out of the open doors of the temples, eating apples; and the beggars get whole sacks full of plums and pears bestowed upon them. This feast comes somewhat too soon in the year for northern Russia, or the opinion of the injuriousness of the fruit before that time, might have a good effect in limiting the consumption of it in an unripe state. As it is, it rather does harm, as the Russian holds all to be ripe and wholesome after the ceremony, and plucks and eats away without restraint.

## MOLEBEN.

One of the strangest kinds of consecration is that which the people sometimes cause to be given their own persons. When any one has any particular act in view, or when some day in the calendar occurs to which he attaches some peculiarly dear association, or when he wishes to offer particular thanksgivings, he goes to a priest, pays him a ruble, and requests him to read a "molében." The priest takes him into the church, generally accompanied by a friend, and, assisted by an inferior priest, reads prayers, sings, and burns incense, while he in whose behalf it is done bows and crosses himself without ceasing. The prayer is not addressed to God, but to the "*Angel Khranitel*," or Guardian Angel, and is, in fact, the little holiday or festival for the angel; hence the "molében" is very often read on the *name day*, which should rather be called the day of the guardian angel, held so sacred by the Russians.

## MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

The manner in which the Russians cross themselves is quite different from that of the Catholics. The little and third finger are drawn back into the hand, the two others and the thumb alone project, as a mystic symbol of the Trinity, and the whole body is bowed at the same time. The common people make this motion in a very grotesque manner, giving a huge swing with the arm and making the cross over the whole body. But the great, who instead of the huge saints of the merchants, have little ones half hidden behind the curtains, make also a little cross in the neighbourhood of the lower button-hole of the waistcoat. Between these two extremes there are a countless number of degrees, and it is amusing to stand near the much-saluted pictures of the Russian church, and watch all the different modifications of signing the cross, and thence to speculate on the



rank and character of the crosses. Grace, affectation, self-complacency, devotion, coldness, pride, all the human virtues and human weaknesses are mirrored in these bowings and crossings. There is no end of them in the churches, and a Russian congregation engaged unceasingly in these exercises, certainly offers the strangest spectacle in the world. On the festival of the *Poklonenie Andrai*,\* the monks must make *two hundred* crosses, bowings, and prostrations, one after another.

The Russian makes his *poklon* when he passes a church or chapel, and takes off his hat besides; that is to say, the lower classes do, nor is it ever forgotten, however hurried they may be. They greet in like manner, the Lutheran as well as the Russian churches. I have even sometimes seen a Russian make this salutation where no church was in sight, when he knew there was one near, though hidden by intervening objects. They do the same when they meet a funeral procession, and when they rise from table, the high as well as the low; they are so accustomed to it from youth up, that they go through the form quite unconsciously. They ought properly to repeat the Lord's Prayer with it; but the greater number do not even assume a serious expression of countenance. Many are talking and laughing all the while.

The oddest of all applications of the sign is made when yawning. Whenever the mouth involuntarily opens for this operation,—which may well excite all sorts of strange fancies among a superstitious people, seeing that we yawn quite against our will,—the Russian thinks it is the work of the Evil One; and that the devil may not slip in to snap up the soul, the sign of the cross must be made before the mouth. This notion is cherished by none more than by venerable matrons, and nothing can be droller than to see an old Russian woman thus busied in defending, against the devil, the mouth that she finds it so difficult to keep shut.

I was once with a numerous party in the Crimea, when the little adopted son of the master of the house ran up to his father with an *Agnus Dei* in his hand. "Canst thou pray before it?" asked the father. "Do so, then." The child placed the *Agnus Dei* on the ground, crossed himself, and touched the floor with his forehead. "Wrong, wrong," said the father, "you should do it this way—see." And hereupon the old man, who was very infirm and very corpulent, prostrated himself before the *Agnus Dei*. I was very glad that the protestant pastor, against whom I had only the evening before zealously defended the Russians against the charge of idolatry, was not present.

With the children it is a very usual play to imitate the action of the priests in celebrating divine service. The little creatures ape the stately march of the popes, straining their voices into a droll imitation of the church melody. The grown people laugh, and see nothing amiss in this. Such things, and indeed the whole coarse style and manner in which they speak of praying and of all parts of divine service, render it unfortunately but too evident how much of their devotion is but external show.

The same thing is apparent from the very short time bestowed on the religious education of a child. There is no gradual development, no continuous, progressive initiation into the mysterious truths of Christianity. As soon as a child is baptized it is received into the Christian

\* The word *Poklonenie* comes from *poklon*, which means a reverence with the body united with the sign of the cross. *Poklonenie Andrai* means as much as a kneeling and courtesying in honour of St. Andrew.

community, and, as a perfect Christian, held immediately to participate in all the privileges of Christianity. Hence the sacrament is given to little children; hence no confirmation or any similar solemnity takes place; hence confession is admitted from boys who can scarcely speak. They give the sacrament even to infants in the arms of their nurses, especially if the child is nearly dying or sickly, because they think that the consecrated bread and wine, without any thing further, will act as a kind of medicinal magic. We should consider this as a desecration of the sacrament, because we hold it efficacious only according to the measure of our acknowledgment of its sacredness, and of our own unworthiness. It is taken in Russia, after confession, by children of seven years old. The confession consists in a question from the priest, whether the penitent have sinned against any one of the Ten Commandments; and if he own such to be the case, a penance, that is, a certain number of prostrations, is imposed; after going through which, absolution and a testimonial are given, as with the Catholics.

#### LIGHTING OF TAPERS.

The lighting of tapers is a religious practice which a Russian does not leave to the priest, but takes on himself. At the church door an attendant of the church always sits to sell these tapers,—little, thin, and yellow, or white, thick, and large, painted or gilt, according to the purse or the piety of the buyers. The churches draw a large income from this; for not only do they carry on the trade on their own account, but the ends that are left, and the wax that falls in drops, are their perquisites, and are a second time melted. On great holidays, when the churches are all thronged so that every one cannot approach the saint he wishes to honour, the lights are seen dancing from hand to hand till they reach the foremost persons, who are requested to light them up. On these occasions they have enough to do, but it is always done with great readiness and devotion.

Such commissions often traverse the kingdom. When, for example, a person is going from St. Petersburg into the interior, the request is often made to him, "Be so good and light up a candle for me of forty kopeks' value, to the miraculous Demetrius, in the church of the Archangel Michael in Moscow;" or sometimes it will be a pair of gilt candles, when any particular good fortune has befallen a person, which he attributes to the intercession of the saint to be honoured. When a Russian has made a sufficient number of crosses, genuflections, and lighted up a candle to his favourite saint, he believes himself as safe from the clutches of the devil as if he lay in Abraham's bosom. Unfortunately, the devil has often already secured a snug corner within the *penitent's* own bosom. It is frequently the case, that people harbouring the most detestable designs will light up tapers like other pious folks to bribe the saints to assist their villanies. A scoundrel once wrote to one of his accomplices: "To-morrow is the day, dear Ivan, when we may at last begin our enterprise. Don't forget to light a candle to the Mother of God in Kasan church to-morrow at nine o'clock. I will do the same to St. John in Trinity church." The enterprise was to rob his master of 10,000 rubles, which he actually accomplished while the tapers were yet burning. No fisherman goes a fishing, no mariner puts out to sea, no traveller leaves his dwelling, and no

robber goes in search of plunder, no murderer betakes him to his bloody work, without crossing himself and lighting up a taper. It is truly a bad sign for the Greek religion, when the wicked hold it as favourable for their purposes as the good can do.

The Russians are so zealous in the outward practices of their religion, that they must have a piece of the church in every corner. In every room of their many-roomed houses hangs a picture of some saint with a lamp constantly burning before it. Such a picture is called an *Obross*. A Russian, on entering a house, first salutes the *Obross*, and then turns to salute the master of the house, to make known his business, or his request; to abuse the host or take his life, according as the object may be. Even the houses of ill repute are no exceptions; they also are half chapels. It may be doubted whether robbers would venture to enter their dens, to divide their booty, if an *Obross* was not suspended there. It is as if the Russians would have a manual proof of the omnipresence of God.

Even the Germans and other foreigners in the interior of the empire are obliged to give in to this Russian craving, so far at least as to suspend a picture in their anterooms. A physician would have little practice if he did not do this.

Generally it is "Bogotez" (God the Father), or "Bog Sün" (God the Son), who are represented on these pictures; or the Holy Trinity, in which the Holy Ghost takes the form of a dove. The Virgin is seldom seen, except in Russian costume, as the Kasan or Iberian Mother of God; still more rarely is it a John, a Peter, a Paul, or a James. On the other hand, St. Michaels and St. Nicholases are abundant. The latter in particular may be found every where; he is decidedly the greatest saint in Russia. To him the greatest number of churches are dedicated, and he has, what no other saint can boast, two holidays in the year, one in winter and one in summer. As a Russian once said to me, he is to the common people, in the world of spirits, what the heir to the throne is in the political world.

These pictures are usually only third-lengths; full-lengths, as the Catholics have them, are hardly ever seen. They are in general horribly ill-painted; and it is therefore very fortunate that they are also so grimy, old, and faded, that nothing can be very distinctly made out of them.

The Russian does not want a beautiful picture like the Italian; and one might perhaps hence draw the consolatory hope that his image-worship was less deeply rooted than it is with many Catholic nations, where they require a positive recognition of the picture to which they pray, and do not find the indistinctly-marked canvass sufficient to realize the divine presence; but it is more probably only a part of his barbarism that the Russian has not yet got so far as to see thus clearly into the depths of his own soul, and the Godhead may be as dim before it as those dark pictures are to his eye.

The accumulation of sacred pictures is often astoundingly large in those families of consequence who make more than ordinary claim to piety and the fear of God. In the storeroom of such a family there is always at least one great chest with pictures in oil, on porcelain, and metal crosses, which have been bought at different times or obtained as presents; glittering amulets, inherited perhaps, and golden cases in which the priests have sealed up a fragment of bone, the relic of some martyr. All these are kept for house use, for presents to the servants, for a journey, to furnish a new house, or for presents to a church which may be building on one of



the estates; or to provide for growing-up children, of whom each has, even in his sixth year, his own Obross hanging at the head of his couch. A wealthy Russian told me that he had a stock of such things to the amount of fifty thousand rubles, and was therefore provided for any possible contingency,

## THE CLERGY OF THE RUSSIAN CHURCH.

If any one ask a Russian who may already have dined, to eat again, he will often answer, "Am I a priest, that I should dine twice over?" This almost proverbial way of expressing themselves refers to the running about of the popes from one funeral feast, or one christening banquet, to another, at which they enjoy themselves more than any one else. A Russian driving out, and meeting a pope, holds it for so bad an omen, that he will rather turn back, if he have not by immediate spitting warded off the evil influence.

"*Niel! on ne iss nashikh!* No! our priest is good for nothing; he is not one of us; he won't drink with us, he won't sing with us; he does as if he did not know us; if he is so proud we will not know him either, and make our gifts and presents to another priest."

Such is the judgment of the peasants, as a very respectable and intelligent priest of a Ukraine village himself once told me, when I asked why he was not contented with his situation. He had lately left the seminary, and, wishing to pursue his studies, did not like to go so much into company. He was unfortunately not on good terms with his colleagues, and on still worse with his flock, who provided him so ill with necessaries, that he could scarcely live.

"In no class of our society do more terrible things happen, and among none does what is scandalous in itself take a more revolting form, than among our priests," was the assurance once made to me by a Russian, and he supported his assertion by a number of abominable tales, which it would not be becoming in me to repeat. If we heard only such proverbs, stories, and assertions concerning the Russian priesthood, it would be better to take no further notice of such a body; but when, on the other hand, we consider that they have some good qualities, of which good nature and toleration are not the only ones, that in these times new lights are breaking in which give hopes of a brighter future, and that the class has produced many excellent individuals, it may not be advisable to turn a deaf ear when our indulgence is solicited, or to refuse a nearer consideration of what we may at first be inclined to pass over as a hopeless desert.

The Russian clergy are divided into the "white" and "black" clergy; the former are the secular, the latter the cloistered clergy. The appellations are derived from their respective dresses, the one party being clothed from head to foot in black, the other performing divine service in white robes bordered with gold. The dress of the black clergy (it is necessary to begin with the outward man, since the outside-loving Russians make it the grand distinction) is throughout Russia the same, like the rules under which they live. The head is covered with a tall cylindrical black cap, round which flutters a long piece of black gauze, which hangs down behind like a lady's veil when thrown back. The principal garment is a long full tunic, made generally of black velvet. The handsome curling beards, with which the monks are universally decorated, harmonize admirably with this

dress; they look like rich fur trimmings on the velvet robes. Their long hair, divided into three tails, one falling down the back and one over each shoulder, is not quite so ornamental.

As the monks all wear black, the secular priests, almost without exception, choose brown for their ordinary dress; when they are officiating as ministers of religion, it is of course different. They wear long brown coats buttoned from top to bottom, and over them long, full open tunics, with wide sleeves. The hair and beard are worn like those of the monks. On their heads they wear high brown or red velvet caps trimmed with handsome fur, and carry excessively long brown sticks studded with wrought silver knobs. Such is the appearance of the Russian secular priest as he marches with stately step through the streets.

Many as are the *Risnitzi* (wardrobes) of the Russian churches that have been seen by travellers, to whom, moreover, the popes have often been goodnatured enough to serve as clothes-horses, it would yet be difficult by any expenditure of words to give even a feeble picture of a priest in pontificalibus. Such things must be left to the painter. It is enough to say that the enormous mass of gold and silk stuffs of various kinds which the Russian clergy, like the catholic, have, in the course of centuries, laid their hands on, is such, that the toilet of the vainest worldling is moderate and modest in comparison.

The highest rank in the church, since Peter the Great abolished the Patriarchate, is that of Metropolitan, of which there are three, one for Moscow, one for Kieff, and one for St. Petersburg. Of these, the Metropolitan of Kieff is first, and he of St. Petersburg the second in rank. After the Metropolitans come the Archiepiscopi, and Episcopi, also called Archipastuiri (archpastors). The bishoprics are divided into those of the first, second, and third rank. To the first, belong those of Kieff, Novgorod, Moscow, and St. Petersburg. The Archimandrites are superiors of convents, and rank next to the bishops. They are followed by the inferior clergy, that is, the Protopopes, or Protopresbiteri, the first popes of the principal churches, who are also the heads of several congregations; the popes (simple priests), the Archidiakons, the Diakons (under priests), who may read the mass, and lastly the Diatschoks, the most insignificant lights of the church, but who must also have "studied" and who, though they perform only manual offices during the divine service, are competent to rise up the ladder of spiritual promotion.

The incomes of the Russian clergy are exceedingly small; the convents, with few exceptions, are very poor since Peter the Great deprived them of their lands and their serfs, and reduced all monks and nuns to ridiculously small pensions of the state. A Metropolitan receives, as such, four thousand rubles banco (about 1300 Russian dollars, or less than 200*l.*); an archbishop has three thousand, and a bishop something less. In this proportion the incomes decrease, till in the lowest ranks, their incomes often do not exceed the wages of a maidservant with us. The poor nuns, when they offer their little works to travellers, often complain of their poverty with melancholy faces; they receive only twenty-five rubles yearly (about twenty-six shillings English), and what more they want they must work for or beg.

It is not to be supposed that either nun or metropolitan could exist on such incomes as these. All must therefore be in the receipt of some extra revenue. The three metropolitans have each one of the greater

Lavras, or monasteries of the first rank. These convents serve them as residences, and the incomes annexed in lieu of benefices. When the metropolitans officiate at funerals, baptisms, &c., among the nobility, very considerable presents are made them, amounting often to 500 or 1000 rubles. Taken at the utmost, however, the income of a metropolitan never can amount to more than 30,000 or 35,000 rubles a year: the simple income of the prince bishop of Olmütz is more than twelve times that of a Russian metropolitan.

The bishops, all additional sources of revenue included, have seldom more than twelve thousand rubles a year. Each bishop has a monastir (convent of the second class) whose income belongs to him, and it must also be observed that all the superior clergy have residences found them, in their convents or within the city, and are maintained and furnished with every thing necessary, from servants and horses, down to dogs, cats, spoons and plates, at the cost of the crown. The greater number are also provided with a country residence, with arable land, domestic animals, and furniture.

The lower classes of priests have, it is true, none of these things, but neither do they starve. Every Russian, even the most miserly, seems to take a pleasure in filling them with good things. I knew a very rich, but very avaricious nobleman who begrudged himself every thing, but who, when a priest came to dine with him, produced all his best wines; a pope rarely came quite sober out of his house, and the holy man's carriage would be packed with all sorts of dainties in addition.

The poor nuns seem to be in the worst condition, because they come so little in contact with the world, which might else bestow somewhat more on them. They must literally live by the labour of their hands; they may sometimes even be seen sowing and digging in the few poor fields which a convent here and there still possesses. They sometimes repair their own walls, and there is a church in Nishney Novgorod, said to have been built by the hands of nuns, probably under the direction of an architect, from the ground to the summit of the tower. They usually knit and weave stockings, silk and woollen girdles, purses and other articles of clothing, and embroider priestly robes and draperies for wealthier churches and convents.

Poor as the Russian clergy appear to be with respect to revenue (a bishop of Durham or Canterbury has perhaps alone as much as half the Dukhovenstvo or hierarchy of Russia), they are rich enough in titles, which are sometimes a yard or two long. If a person enter the apartment of a metropolitan, and address him, the title runs thus:— "*Vuissokopreosswäshtshennaishi Vladiko*, or if he write to him;—" *Yewo Vuissokopreosswäshtshenstvo Milostiväishu Gossudariu i Archipastuiru*. The principal word may be translated—His most high holiness. The whole address is something like—His most high holiness the most dear and gracious lord, the Lord Archpastor.

All these titles are most rigidly observed in addressing a letter; in addressing them personally a little less strictness is permitted. Yet these very persons, who so load them with verbal honour, are not thereby deterred from sometimes laying aside all respect for the most high holinesses in a very unceremonious manner. So long as he is engaged in the performance of his functions the priest is treated with extreme reverence. Not only the laity kiss the hand of the chief priests after the service, but the inferior



priests do the same when they receive the chalice, Bible, or any thing else from them; and without the church, when the priests make state visits, the ladies kiss the hand of the meanest of them, on which account many carefully cherish a pretty hand, and decorate and perfume it when they pay these visits. These two occasions excepted, the priests enjoy no great personal influence or consideration. A priest's advice is seldom asked in family matters; even the domestic chaplains in great houses are there to perform divine service only, and never penetrate into the interior of families, as the Catholic clergy do. The peasants with us know no better counsellor than their pastor; but the Russian peasant, in cases of difficulty, rather turns to his saints' pictures, and invokes the sacrament rather than the priest who comes with it. One cannot help wondering how little the people in the streets or houses of public entertainment seem held in check by the presence of a priest. Rarely is one seen appeasing a dispute, or exerting any moral authority to restore order; he passes on like any other indifferent person. Moral influence, indeed, they have little or none; only with the saints in their hands are they feared or respected—only as directors of religious ceremonies—not as interpreters of the living word of God.

How much more the Russian people are devoted to their pictures than their priests was proved in the most striking manner in the reign of Catherine by an occurrence in Moscow. During the prevalence of an epidemic sickness the government had caused a picture of the "Varvarian Mother of God," one of the most revered in the city, to be removed and put aside in a church, to withdraw it from the frantic kisses of the people, who in thus supplicating for help only spread disease further. The affair caused a riot. The people broke into the church, and compelled the priests to restore the picture to its place. The government thereupon applied to the Metropolitan, who took it on himself again to remove the Varvarian Mother; which so irritated the people that they fell upon the Metropolitan in the public streets, killed, and tore him in pieces. The priests naturally reap as they have sown. As they preach no lessons of reason or morality, they have no moral lever to put in motion; and as they only inspire reverence in their magnificent pontificalibus, little or none by their example and personal qualities, the hem of their gold-embroidered *yepitrakhils* are constantly kissed, while their brown every-day tunics, we are assured, often meet with hard knocks. The government uses them no better. The temporal power sometimes makes considerable inroads on the spiritual without calling the priests to counsel; and priests, like other public officers, are liable to hard reprimands and severe punishments. They may be sent to Siberia, or degraded to serve as common soldiers. The milder punishments are suspension from the exercise of their office, and degradation to the lowest offices in the church, or to the condition of ordinary monks. It is a well-known fact, that those who on leaving seminaries directly take orders as secular priests, though they obtain livings more quickly, never rise to the higher dignities of bishop or archbishop. They serve either as diatschok and diakon, or if, after leaving the seminary, they enter some other spiritual academy, they may become popes immediately. They have a right to marry like other men, but they may only marry once, and after the death of his wife a priest usually retires to a convent.

Those only who submit to the severities of a conventual life, and, renouncing the happiness of marriage altogether, live only as half men, are

esteemed worthy of the higher spiritual dignities. They reach them by the several steps of novice, *monach* (monk), *hieromonach* (chief monk), *archimandrite* (abbot), and so on. A nun is called *monakhina*, an abbess *iyumena*, denominations all taken from the Greek. The higher clergy also take masters' and doctors' degrees at the academies.

The ranks of the clergy are recruited partly from themselves, partly from the lower classes of the people. The number of pupils obtained in their own families is not inconsiderable, for in Russia also the marriages of priests are usually very fruitful. The journal of the ministry for the interior gives on an average five children for every priest's marriage; this is for St. Petersburg. In the interior of the empire the average may be higher. The sons of priests generally follow the profession of their father; they are called *popovitshi*. The extra demand is supplied by the free peasants and the burgers. The children of the nobles seldom or never enter the church as they do in Catholic countries. During an abode of several years in Russia I never heard but of one *employé* who entered a convent in consequence of domestic misfortune; and of two officers who took the same step, from what motives I know not. I once found a German Protestant in a Russian convent, whose talents and education had at his outset in life promised him a very advantageous career.

So much for the outward condition and position of the Russian clergy. For the inward it must be owned, when we consider the whole system and its fruits during the course of centuries, and when we compare their deeds with those of the priesthood in other countries, they are a very insignificant body. They have done nothing super-excellent for the arts or for science, nor produced men who in any respect have done humanity great service. They lived, eat, drank, married, christened, buried, absolved, and died; and on the whole they have not done much else. There are, it is true, notabilities among the Russian clergy, but they are such only in Russia. To the list of Russian authors enumerated in the academical calendar for 1839, the clerical profession had contributed only 102; of these, 66 were patriarchs, metropolitans, and bishops: the rest were monks.

Some things however are to be said in praise of the Russian priesthood. They are not less than other Russians distinguished for their toleration in matters of religion. It is true the matter does not lie very near their hearts; because they have few thoughts or ideas connected with it, which have become firm convictions, and are maintained as such; they are therefore peaceful, not so much out of dislike to quarrelling as from a want of zeal and energy. It is a merit in them nevertheless. Nowhere does this tolerant spirit appear in a more favourable light than on the frontiers of the Russian and Polish provinces. Here there are in many places only Greek and Roman Catholic priests, and no Protestant pastor. Should it happen that a foreign Protestant is in want of spiritual assistance in sickness, or should the body of a Protestant require burial, it is almost invariably the Catholic, who in an inhuman and unchristian manner refuses his spiritual aid, while the Russian gives his without hesitation.\* In such cases foreigners always apply to the Russian rather than to the Catholic priests. Seldom is an unkind word heard from Russian priests when speaking of a person of a different faith; and those who understand German, will even go frequently to the Protestant churches to hear the

\*I have this remark from the mouth of a German Russian Protestant.

preachers. In the Baltic provinces, when the military, who happen to be stationed there, have no Russian church within reach, the Russian priests never hesitate to perform divine service in a Protestant church, and in the interior it has happened that they have lent their own churches to Protestants. In Austria, Protestant churches are only called prayer houses. In Russia the priests treat them as on an equal footing with their own. Neither do they hesitate to bury their dead in the same churchyards with the Protestants.\* The cultivated part of the priesthood, who understand German, are much more inclined to the Protestant than to the Catholic party; more to rationalism than mysticism. Their libraries prove it. Niemeyer's works, his Bible, the *Stunden der Andacht*, Schleiermacher's writings, Neander's Church History, are frequently met with. Here and there I have even seen Strauss's Life of Christ. The works of the other party are on the contrary very rare. When some recent occurrences in the Baltic provinces and in Poland are called to mind, it may be thought that the Russian priesthood are somewhat less tolerant now than formerly, and in fact it is only natural, that with the proud exaltation of political power, the church should also begin to lift up her head. As the government seeks to advance the political creed, the church may endeavour by more urgent zeal and greater energy to spread "the one and only true faith;" but if the church does take her share in the conquests, and appears to progress in those provinces, it does so certainly far less from its own impulse than in consequence of commands emanating from a higher quarter.

\* That the Protestants in Russia have generally their own churchyards arises from other causes, and certainly not from any want of toleration on the part of the Russian priests. In many, both parties are mingled indiscriminately.



## THE ACADEMIES AND SEMINARIES OF THE CLERGY.

The academies and seminaries of the clergy boast of having awakened many a great mind for Russia. Speransky and Lomonossoff are not the only names. Much is said to be taught there. All instruction is given in the Russian and Latin languages. After Latin,—Greek, and the Slavonian languages (in the latter all the Russian ecclesiastical books are written), are the chief points of attention. Hebrew is seldom taught at all. I have often seen the students in the different towns, before their doors, or in the courts of the seminary, busily engaged with their books, sometimes even in winter, and in the snow; but in general they were only learning by rote. The priests have, of course, with different classes of pupils different methods of enforcing their instructions. The man of the “people” if he be taught at all, is taught otherwise than the future priest, otherwise than the son of a noble. To the first it is only “take and believe.” “To the latter, whose awakened spirit of inquiry they cannot repress in any other way, they give plausible motives and significations for all their ceremonies and dogmas. They have some pretty symbolical meaning for every practice, historical sanction for every trifle; a text from Scriptures for every ordinance, and thus by reconciling the mind to their usages, they win assent to their existence.

This is the course of *private* instruction. In public every dogma of the church is advanced in unadulterated purity, and the most exact and complete answers are required to the most direct and special questions. As a proof of this I will give a specimen\* of an examination held by a priest of some rank, in the presence of a great assembly. On these occasions a casket is presented to the students, who draw out the questions, which are written in the Latin language. For example, the following: *Quid est cælum? Quid est Deus? &c.* The first student drew the question *Quid est angelus?*

PRIEST. *Bene! Dicas mihi quæso quid sit angelus?*

PUPIL. A holy spirit serving God in Heaven.

PRIEST. *Bene.* How many angels are there in Heaven?

PUPIL. A vast number, it cannot be precisely given.

PRIEST. Indeed! It can be precisely given! Who knows?

ANOTHER PUPIL. Twelve legions.

PRIEST. *Bene.* How many compose a legion?

PUPIL. In the time in which the Bible was written, a legion was composed of about 4500.

PRIEST. How many angels are there then in Heaven?

The pupil tried in vain to reckon it in his head.

PRIEST. If you cannot reckon it in your head, take the chalk and reckon it on the board.

The pupil took the chalk and wrote down

$$\begin{array}{r} 4500 \\ 12 \\ \hline 54,000 \end{array}$$

\* I should hesitate to give a specimen, as it is somewhat difficult to believe in its correctness, if I had not had it word for word from the mouth of a man I could rely on, and who was present at the examination.

PUPIL. 54,000.

PRIEST. *Bene*. Of what sex are the angels?

PUPIL. That cannot be exactly determined.

BENE. But I mean in their outward appearance, in their garments. Are they more like the male or female sex? In a word, how are their garments formed when they appear to us?

A kind of medium between the two, a sort of toga in folds.

*Bene*.

&c. &c. &c.

After all these theoretical matters comes the practical part; the "slushba" (service), and therein at a later period consists the chief art. A young Russian seminarist is much more zealous to learn the "service," and to qualify himself for the execution of the minutest forms, and of his abilities that way he is much more proud, than of a knowledge of the more difficult questions of doctrine. As in all offices of religion,—baptism, mass, &c.—the form is in every minute particular defined, and every stone, so to say, hewn and carved as in a Gothic church; it requires study and long practice, to get them all at the fingers' ends. I believe the suppleness of the Russians must do them good service here, and they find their way through the maze much more quickly than a German would do.

Speaking of an officer the phrase is often used, "*On otshen kharasho slushbu snayet*" (He knows the service very exactly). The same phrase is applied to a priest. Yet strange does it sound to hear the demeanour of a priest in the performance of his duties criticized in this manner. "*Il fait le service avec beaucoup de sentiment*;" or from another, "I do not like to go to him, he makes such a ridiculous figure in the service, and has such bad manners."

At first I did not understand this, and did not see how it was possible when the form of the spectacle was so precisely settled, that there could be much difference; but I afterwards observed among the priests traces of affectation, an artificial sentimentality, and striving after effect, in the manner of making the cross, in pronouncing the blessing, in putting on the robes, and so forth. I shall never forget one old bishop, whom I have often seen officiate. The man might have been as old as the patriarchs; his white hair, and long white beard, hung from his head like the long moss tangles from a northern pine; his slow step and gentle motions were those of a spirit, and his voice sounded like that of a hamadryad from the hollow of a half-decayed oak. When he pronounced the often-repeated words "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;" the last words sounded so ghostlike through the church, that one felt as if a supernatural being were near. Such priests are best liked by the Russians, they prefer them to young men gifted with the finest voices, as they prefer their old black pictures to the pretty newly-painted ones, and old worn dirty prayer-books to clean and well printed ones.

Just such another figure was the old Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, who could no longer hold a book, and was besides too dim-sighted to have read it if he had. The Bible used to be held before him, and what he had to read whispered in his ear by another, when the prompter was sometimes better heard than the actor.

## THE SECTS OF THE RUSSIAN CHURCH

I was sitting once on the shores of the Black Sea with an old Greek fisherman, who had formerly been captain of a small vessel, and as such had in his youth visited Odessa, which was then a little Turkish anchoring-place. We had been speaking of different things, and came at last to the differences in religious belief. After sundry remarks on the subject, my companion expressed his sentiments thus: "The only true Christians are those of the Greek church. That is evident. For what is Christianity? It is the holy Trinity, and the three fingers mean the Trinity. We make the cross the only right way with three fingers. The Lutherans don't make the sign of the cross at all. I won't say that they are heathens exactly, but there is very little Christianity in them. And the Catholics, my God!"—and here he burst into an immoderate fit of laughter,—“they make the cross with thumps and punches in the ribs!” He could hardly recover himself from the excess of his mirth at the folly of the wrong-believing Catholics!

I had never before heard the absolute quintessence of the Greek faith, in the opinion of the common people, so frankly expressed as by this man, and he must have known it in fact better than the Russians themselves, inasmuch as he belonged to the nation from whom the former have received their faith. Now, I preface my few remarks on the sects of the Russian church, by these opinions of the worthy captain on Christianity, the Trinity, and the three fingers, because they offer the only correct medium through which these sectarian differences can be viewed. As the whole religion of the Greco-Russians consists more in outward observance than that of any other people, the sects formed in the bosom of their church differ in no other respect than in forms; and never in any variance of opinion respecting the nature of the divine being. No prophet has ever risen among them to reform the errors of their doctrine or form of worship. Some changes have undeniably taken place in the course of centuries, but they have been changes of manner, not of matter; sects have arisen, not, however, from any yearning after newer and higher light, but from a stubborn clinging to the older forms. That such is really the case is sufficiently proved by their name "*Staroverui*" (old-believers), under which name all the sects, said to be fifty in number, are included. Our dissenting sects might rather be called "*new-believers*," as they have sprung from the birth of new ideas.

Suyeff, who in the time of Catherine published some very interesting notes of his travels in the interior of Russia, is of opinion that many of those sects are the offspring of the heathen times. In Tula he found a sect which practised many Indian superstitions, and denied the divinity of Christ; he thought it might be the remains of an Indian commercial colony from the borders of the Caspian Sea, which had assumed some external semblance of Christianity, or some heathen *protestants* against the Christianity introduced by Vladimir, who to their old heathenish rites had superadded the Christian.

Some of those sects have priests, others not; some choose their spiritual guides only among those persons who for some crime have been ejected from the ranks of the orthodox priesthood. Some build their churches one way, some another; one never observes any fast, another prohibits fish



as a fast-dish. In short, differences in external forms are endless; in the inward spirit there are none. There are some sects accused of hideous licentiousness in their doctrine and practice; for example, one sect is said to resemble the Adamites in Bohemia, whose members live, with respect to marriage, as did the children of Adam. Another sect believe they perform a work grateful to God in sacrificing their manhood.

The hatred and contempt of these sects for one another, and the enmity between all of them and the orthodox church, are excessive; and it is remarkable that the Russians, otherwise so tolerant, should be so very bitter in these dissensions with their brethren. The sectarians are the most so, at least the occasions of scandal that have arisen proceed almost exclusively from them. The hatred of those sects who do not smoke, who do not eat fish, or who make the cross from right to left, against those who differ from them in these things, goes so far, that they not only spit in each other's faces, but hold it to be not only pardonable, but positively meritorious, to kill one of the obnoxious misbelievers. Whilst the orthodox Russian respects even a Lutheran church, some of these heretics hold any degree of outrage to be allowable in a consecrated place *not* consecrated to their own faith.

The town of Rsheff, lying on that part of the Volga where it first becomes navigable, and which enjoys a considerable trade, holds within its walls considerable numbers of those who protested against Peter the Great's tobacco-smoke and razors. The place contains 10,000 inhabitants, and many of the richest merchants belong to the Staroverui. The orthodox believers are less numerous, and have in consequence suffered much from the insolence of the "old-believers." In the year 1832, the latter went a little too far, and an accusation was made, to examine the truth of which an extraordinary commission was sent from St. Petersburg. A party of the old-believers had given an old disbanded soldier, a poor devil who was ready for any mischief, a few hundred rubles, to put some gross insult upon their orthodox townsmen. He went, in consequence, one morning to the principal church of the latter, burst through the "royal door" of the Ikonostas, through which the high-priest alone enters, entered the sanctuary, seized the consecrated bread and threw it on the floor, and drank up the red wine as if to the health of those present. Then throwing the chalice at their heads, he burst through the not very numerous congregation and went to his patrons to relate his scandalous exploit. After such an occurrence as this, it may be readily supposed that both parties broke out into open hostilities, and even during the stay of the commission, which consisted of several generals, and other persons of rank, various murders were committed, the incensed parties lying mutually in wait for each other. The commission could do as little with these episodal crimes as with the original offence. The "old-believers" corrupted all the witnesses, and even went so far as to offer, through a third hand, a bribe of 200,000 rubles, to the commissioners themselves. Some of the poorer offenders were punished; but the wealthy planners of the whole scandal escaped altogether, and the commission separated without doing any thing.

There are "old-believers" in St. Petersburg, but they are few. Moscow is their head-quarters, to judge by the size of their churchyard. In Tula there are said to be 10,000. It is not possible to make a very exact estimate of their numbers, as they conceal themselves in some measure, and

do not willingly confess their absurd tenets. No government has produced more Staroverui than that of Peter the Great, because none introduced more reforms. As the open protestations of the discontented were without effect, they naturally formed sects, which, though small, originally, compared with the great body of orthodox believers, are said rather to have increased than diminished in later times. Many of the "old-believers" on finding themselves oppressed in their native place, have left it and settled elsewhere. The numerous Cossack colonies in the northern Pontine lands, are abundantly recruited with such heretical emigrants. In the steppes of Southern Russia there are many villages of "old-believers," said to have been settled there from the time when those provinces were not subject to Russia. They are also numerous along the former Turkish frontier on the Dnieper. It is to be remarked of these "old-believers," that they are by no means so hospitable as the orthodox part of the community. Volunteer ciceroni are never found in their churches, and they are not willing to receive strangers into their houses without numberless previous conditions. They are particularly afraid, not of their smoking, for that they take care they shall not do, but of their bringing even the smell of smoke with them, as in that case the whole house must be aired, purified, and fumigated. Western Europeans they do not at all like, as to them are ascribed the hated innovations; hence the Staroverui are unfit subjects for the St. Petersburg emperors; they would better have suited the Muscovite czars, being in all respects people of the ancient regime.

## THE UNIVERSITY.

The University of Moscow had some years ago a striking example of attachment to youthful recollections, in the person of a professor of chemistry, who, up to the year 1829, made use of a compendium published in 1778, whence he conscientiously taught his pupils the same doctrine that he had himself imbibed in his youth. He overlooked the fact that, in the course of forty years, all to which he clung with such enduring love had been long utterly rejected and cast away. He forgot that science was not standing still; that the advance of chemistry was palpable from year to year, almost from day to day; and he continued gravely to sit on his egg, and to prophesy that it would speedily be hatched, long after it had become evident there was nothing under him but an empty shell.

One of his colleagues—the two must have suited each other admirably—a professor of Greek, continued for five-and-twenty years together, to propound marvels to the students, out of Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, which is usually but light nourishment for a student of the second year. If these two facts afford fair data from which to judge the general condition of the oldest university in Russia, from 1755 to 1830, its usefulness cannot have been very remarkable. In the latter year, however, a considerable change was made for the better. Some of the professors were honourably dismissed, and the sum of 80,000 rubles advanced to supply some enormous deficiencies in the library. New buildings were erected, and the professors informed, that the chemical class-books of 1778 had become more or less obsolete; and also that to redeliver remarks on Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, from the works of foreigners, was no very remarkable effort on the part of a Greek professor.

Accordingly, on our visit in 1837, signs of improvement were visible.

A new church had just been finished, a large hall for the museum erected, and some neighbouring houses purchased for the extension of the academy. The number of the students was not, however, on the increase; there had been, in 1828, nearly 800; in 1837 there were only 600.

The scientific collections are on the whole insignificant, although they offer some things worthy of admiration. In the mineral collection is the great Siberian emerald, three inches long and two thick. In the zoological, there is a bouquet of flowers formed of fifty colibris, arranged into that form, the work of one of the lower servants of the institution; a pretty fancy, but fitter for the apartment of an Indian princess, than for a scientific collection.

The things best worth seeing in the University of Moscow are the anatomical cabinet of Loder, with the microscopic preparations of Lieberkuhn. This collection is particularly rich in human hearts, of which there are a great number, all spitted on needles. I thought, while looking at them, of the many poor hearts yet beating, whose muscles are doomed to quiver on as keen a point! The idea of a broken heart belongs to the English;—a heart upon a spit is just as peculiar to Russia, where broken hearts in the English sense are few, but very many the hearts bedded on needles.

In Loder's anatomical collection there is also a camel's stomach expanded to its natural extent, with all its cells and subdivisions. It is so arranged, that every hidden corner in which the food is retained till perfectly dissolved, can be as exactly noted as if the spectator could put his head into the very body of the camel. The stomach is a good deal cherished in Moscow, as is well known; it is quite natural, therefore, that many rarities from this interesting portion of the animal organization should be preserved here. Among other things there is a stocking taken from the stomach of a cow, and which had been there changed into a hard firm mass, without losing the appearance of the web; the remains of a billiard-ball from the stomach of a dog, where, within four-and-twenty hours it had diminished to a fifth of the original size; a pair of scissors, a knife, and a fork, from the stomach of a man, where they had been twisted and bent as by the hammer of a smith. In the same stomach, which had belonged to some fire-eating conjurer, there were found no less than ten pounds weight of such foreign substances, very hard of mastication one would think, even if the strong hand of a Peter had previously removed all the bad teeth. The instrument used for tooth-drawing by this remarkable sovereign, lies in the same case with those stomach curiosities; it is a little, rough, short instrument, something like that used by smiths to pick locks. This illustrious surgeon was a diligent operator in this branch of science; nevertheless, he has left many a foul stump in the head of Russia, of which the worst of all is the serfdom of the peasants; the removal of that evil is an operation yet to be performed.

In the cases containing Lieberkuhn's preparations are some specimens quite unique in their kind. Among other things there are some excessively fine injections of many of the minutest vessels of the human body, done by the late Professor Lieberkuhn, of Berlin. Every injection is enclosed with a microscope of its own, through the glasses of which the most interesting and wonderful perspective is afforded into the fathomless depths and sinuosities of a morsel of fat, or of a scale of the skin. In one of the microscopes the objects are the pores of a square line of a hu-



man gall-bladder; into the most delicate arterial divisions and fibres, imperceptible to the naked eye, Professor Lieberkuhn has injected some fluid so subtle, that every thread is as perceptible as those in a fine piece of embroidery. It is a pity the whole human frame cannot be in like manner contemplated, thus enlarged and *Lieberkuhnized*, with all its mechanism at work; that the effects produced by the raging of the passions in the ramifications of the vessels might be studied, together with the impulses of virtue and of thought upon the web of our nerves. Spirits so fine, and hands so delicate as Lieberkuhn's are not often born; and it is much to be lamented that the recipe for the preparation of the red material used by him for his injections should have died with him.

The collection of human skeletons is very complete; there are not less than forty specimens varying from the embryo, five inches long, to the full development of the organization. They are arranged on stages in the hall; which contains many other things calculated to awaken the zeal of a former professor of the University of Kasan, who, when he heard of the godless work carried on by the anatomists in the institution under his charge, ordered an immediate stop to be put to it, caused all the human remains of bones and skeletons to be collected, and then had them buried.

The same Isvoshtshik who had brought me to the university, drove me also to the *Synodalniya Typographia* (Printing-office of the Synod), which I had the permission of the director to inspect. As children want counters to reckon with, the Russians cannot get on without the help of their reckoning tables. If these are not at hand, they imagine them and push the beads to the right and left till the desired result is obtained. When I asked the director how many books were printed at his office in the year, he moved the beads with great rapidity on his board and reported the numbers. In 1836 his presses sent forth seventy-six works, of which 261,000 copies were thrown off, containing 1,333,000 sheets, to be sold for 360,000 rubles. The principal work was the *Slovenskaya Asbuka* (the Slavonian A-B-C-book) which alone took up nearly a third of the number.

The Synodal Printing-office is remarkable as being the oldest in Moscow, and indeed in Russia. It was founded in 1553 by Ivan IV. This date is inscribed in large figures over the building, although the greater part was burnt down in 1812; but it was rebuilt in the old style,—a most unwise expedient, for if there is any good to be derived from a conflagration, it is the destruction of old, inconvenient forms, and the opportunity afforded for the introduction of a better style of architecture.

We must not, of course, come to the Synodal Printing-office in Moscow, founded 300 years ago, and which in 1812 again assumed the robe of the middle ages, to study the progress of Russian printing. The ancient venerable Slavonian writings, clinging so fondly to what is old, that they are still printed in the primitive letters brought to the barbarian Slavonians by Kyrill and Methodius, 1000 years ago, are naturally slow to adopt improvements in machinery, which being innovations are very unwillingly admitted at all. The presses in this establishment are all constructed after antique models, in which more oak than iron is used. Even the little "quick press," introduced here in 1830 from the Alexander machine-manufactory in St. Petersburg, groans fearfully under its work of enlightenment; one may perceive by the clang and clatter, how very

tedious it must find the task of bringing old Slavonian A-B-C-books into the world. Some radical defect there must be in the machine, for every sheet came out notched, and with a fold in it.

Not only the types with which the old Slavonian church-books are printed differ from those of profane presses, but the whole manner of setting them differs likewise. The letters are taken up with the left-hand,\* and the whole manual labour, even to the minutest detail, has its antique peculiarities. Unfortunately the time was too short for me to find out the why and wherefore of these peculiarities.

One hundred and sixty-five workmen are employed on these eighty works. Out of darkness cometh light; for in the whole establishment reigns so obscure a twilight, that in stepping into the street we felt as if we were coming out of a mine, a mine whence was afterwards to shine forth the gold of the sacred writings.

#### PUBLIC GARDENS.

#### TEA-HOUSES AND TAVERNS.

Whoever has made a pilgrimage through the churches of Moscow, and afterwards followed the windings of the shops, without tasting any thing better than street dust and Russian church air, cannot be greatly deserving of reproof if his eyes run as eagerly over the signs of the houses as those of a young lady through a romance, till they rest on the wished for word *Restauration*,† not the less welcome for its orthographical corruption into *Rastirazie*. I was soon fortunate enough to find myself in the first or entrance room of a Russian coffee-house, where all the delicacies to be enjoyed in the second and third, were in the process of frying, roasting, and boiling. That I might be duly imbued with Russia, inside as well as out, I bespoke a Russian dish, *Selennoi Shtshi* (green cabbage soup), and must own I did not repent it, for the soup was good and nourishing. Besides, as it is not transparent, one is not aware of the delicacies it may conceal in its depth, and one may enjoy all the pleasure of curiosity in fishing them up with a spoon. This was my first trial of *Selennoi Shtshi*, so I made a bold plunge. The first prize for me the "sausage eater" as the Russians call us Germans, was in fact a sausage; then I landed a piece of beef, then an invitingly-coloured piece of ham, an egg, and a number of other things besides. While waiting for my second dish, I had time to look about me a little. The rooms were very large, painted in gay colours and abundantly furnished with looking-glasses; a picture of a saint with a lamp before it was in every room, of course. The name of the domestics is legion, in the Russian coffee-house as in the house of a nobleman. In this house, though there were only eight rooms, the attendants were sixty in number. In the coffee-houses of Moscow they are all dressed in white cotton; white pantaloons, white shirts or jackets, and white girdles to bind all together.

\* Unless some Russian wag purposely misled me. I cannot now remember whether I saw it myself or not.

† Throughout Germany the word *restauration* is used for what in France is known under the appellation of *restaurant*, and the Russians, it seems, have adopted the German-French designation from their neighbours.

The rest of the company were all Russians, mostly merchants, with only a thin sprinkling of Tshinnovniks. The long beards sat together and drank tea, the unbearded smoked and were reading newspapers like other Europeans. Peter the Great was right therefore, it would seem, in considering the beard as a great obstacle to civilization, and in seeking to explode it by every possible means. Everyone as he came in saluted the picture, and crossed himself before he sat down.

One of the things most striking to a European in these coffee-houses is the collection of pipes. They are long earthen tubes with flat Turkish heads, such as are used by the military, and indeed throughout Russia. The said collection is intended for public use, and the pipes travel from mouth to mouth. The servants fill, light, and carry them round smoking to the guests. It is difficult at first to imagine how it is possible to employ the crowds of attendants, till we note how much service the Russian public require. Not only the pipes must be cleaned, filled, lighted, and put in the mouths of the guests, but many will have their tea poured out, and their cutlets and stakes cut in small pieces for them. Whether there are any persons who further require that it should be conveyed to their mouths for them, I do not know. However, even here, one person to attend each guest one would think sufficient; but four or six hands are generally so employed, half-a-dozen busy themselves with putting on a cloak, and when a guest leaves the room all the servants bow in chorus. Withal they must have abundance of idle time. I saw many in the evening sitting on the benches doing nothing; one was asleep and snoring with his head on the table, others were playing cards; one was practising the art of writing, and another that of smoking. There is no country in the world where men must be driven so much in herds, to accomplish any work, as in Russia. I have read in history that they always storm a fortress by thousands, and I have seen them every where, ploughing, reaping, and sowing by hundreds; the same principle is at work I presume in the coffee-houses, for I had four people to put on my cloak.

#### THE PALACE IN RUINS.

Although Moscow has risen with wonderful celerity from the ashes of 1812, yet all traces of that fearful conflagration have not entirely disappeared. In different parts of the city there are still to be seen houses with the windows and doors burnt away, and overgrown with grass, and in the church of the "Protection of Mary" several chapels lay still in 1837 in dust and desolation, as they had been left by the French in 1812.

One of the most extensive ruins of this kind is the palace of the family of —off, situated on a hill opposite the Kremlin, rearing itself above the neighbouring houses, and presenting to the eyes of a traveller a most imposing mass. The family is one of the many that date their wealth and honours from the time of Catherine. They possessed at one time several palaces here, but to maintain them in order much money was wanting, and as money gradually slipped through their fingers, the greater number of the palaces were sold, and even then there was not money enough left to repair one, after it had been plundered by the French. This palace, as it has many pendants in Moscow, and is marked by



many of the characteristics of social life peculiar to that city, may deserve some further mention.

Viewed from a distance it is one of the proudest of palaces; when we examine it more closely, we perceive a showy exterior of decoration, veiling ruin and decay. The entrance to the courtyard is through a great portal guarded by two huge lions; but the portal is made of brick, and and the lions, hollow plaster figures, have long since fallen to pieces. Lions made of such frail materials, and in just such miserable condition, are very often found as door-keepers before the palaces of Moscow; proofs of the unsolid spirit of the place; of the outward show of greatness, where the substance is wholly wanting. Nothing can be more unsettled than the lives of some of the nobles; they wander through all the steppes of Russia, go far into the interior, and vanish for a time on their estates; then build a house in Moscow, and set up plaster lions before the door; they are soon weary of this, sell the whole colony, and take up their abode in St. Petersburg. Thus it is that nothing really beautiful and solid is ever erected.

The courtyards of the —off palace might be called in the *highest degree* disorderly; inasmuch as weeds are every where springing up between the paving-stones, and broken carriage-wheels, mouldering barrels, and other rubbish are lying about; but it is advisable to be sparing with superlatives, and begin with the positive “disorderly,” in kitchen, cellar, and chamber, in order to have words in reserve to bestow on what is quite unbearable.

As for kitchens in Russia, we may as well take occasion to recommend travellers in general, not to be too curious in their inquiries after the places in which the dishes set before them are prepared, but to eat with what appetite they may, and ask no questions. Judged by the standard of a Dutch or English, or in some measure even of a German kitchen, that of the —off palace is undeniably an uninviting, dirty hole. In so far it fulfils the business of a kitchen, as the sight of it is calculated to take away one’s hunger in the most perfect manner. In the other rooms I found large chandeliers half broken, lying covered with dust on the floor, and oil paintings pell-mell with broken pots. Established temples of disorder, lumber-rooms as they are called, are necessary in every house, and contribute to the general tidiness of a mansion, but whole suites of lumber-rooms, are peculiar to a Muscovite household.

I next ascended with the house-steward to the roof, to enjoy the fine prospect which I thought it must offer. All the upper chambers were in the same deplorable condition, to which the French had reduced them, with the addition of the rubbish added by the tooth of time. The house is indeed once more roofed, and also provided with balustrades, pillars, balconies, and such things, “*dla krassoti*” (for beauty) as my guide expressed it. But every one knows how very fragile a thing Russian beauty is, and how very soon that which is meant for ornament (like the unnatural rouge on a woman’s cheek) has exactly a contrary effect. The architectural decorations (this word is peculiarly suited to the Russian style of building) are, again, in a most melancholy state of decay. The balustrade is fallen away from the terrace, the pillars are no longer perpendicular, and the plaster urns are hanging over the walls ready to be hurled by the first high wind into the street below.

The daws, pigeons, crows, &c., have nestled in such numbers, in the

great empty space within, that the whole house is like one great aviary. Thirty or thirty-five fire-ravaged chambers and corridors have been changed, by the accumulated filth of a quarter of a century, into veritable Augean stables; to cleanse which the property of the family is no longer Herculean enough. As for the doves, these innocent favourites of Venus have increased so astonishingly that they are a public calamity. The steward told me he had often had the upper windows repaired, but they were constantly broken by the doves; and when he caused them to be nailed up with boards, these birds had pecked themselves an entrance through the roof. The Russians have a kind of religious horror of killing one of these birds, though they take no care of them otherwise; and it is even so with the dogs, particularly among the people of Lesser Russia.

The —off palace has so commanding a site, and looks so imposing from the streets of Moscow, that many may be misled as I was, and fancy there is a fine view of the Kremlin to be obtained from it; let me observe here once for all, that they may spare themselves the trouble of mounting the steps. The walls of the Kremlin are higher on this side than any where else, so high, that it is impossible to see completely over them. All its towers and churches seem to lie in a heap, nothing is developed or grouped, the utmost to be gained is the knowledge of what we should scarcely have otherwise surmised, that even the Kremlin has its wearisome side.

On the ground-floor, a suite of elegant apartments does not disdain to lie under that wilderness of dirt and lumber which has just been described, and above that melancholy *souterrain* of servants' offices. The master of the house lives here only a short time in winter, being fettered to St. Petersburg by some public office. When the family is coming, the rooms are cleaned and patched and painted, and all "*kak ni bud*" (is somehow) put into seeming order; sufficiently so at least to make a show for six weeks.

#### MOSCOW A PROVINCIAL CITY.

In the time of Catherine and Paul, and even under Alexander, Moscow was a *secessus* of the richest and most independent nobles; and partially it is so now, but by no means in the degree we in Germany suppose. In the theatre, at the concerts, &c., it has far more the character of a provincial city, than of a capital, as it still calls itself. Under the reign of the Emperor Nicholas, though he has not neglected this darling of the nation, and heart of its interior life, the importance of the city has greatly diminished. Not only the most distinguished talents which have devoted themselves to the service of the state are to be found in St. Petersburg, but the largest fortunes have been allured thither by the charms of the court. Many palaces and magnificent country-houses are unoccupied in the neighbourhood of Moscow; a large number have fallen into the hands of the Government. The court, if it does not, as under some former reigns, show too much scorn of national manners, has a wonderfully attractive power over the Russians. They are far from being animated by the spirit of Cæsar, who would rather have been the first man in Krähwinkel than the second in Rome. The Russians think rather, "better be one among thousands in St. Petersburg, than the only one in Moscow." It has been well said, as long ago as by Herberstein, no nation has such a passion for submitting to command as the Russians.

Thus in Moscow we find at the present time, moderate fortunes, and moderate talents; fortunes not large enough to veil other deficiencies, talents not great enough to secure their position in society. Here too the bonds of society sit lighter and easier; all is more old Russian, the French-German manners of the Baltic capital are not liked, and those of the old Asiatic centre are greatly preferred. This is particularly the case with the wealthy merchants and some others, who have no personal privileges in society. For them Moscow will long remain the loved and holy.

Moscow must also remain the centre of internal commerce, as this advantage does not depend upon the caprice of an individual will, but on geographical position. The manufactures of the city have increased greatly of late years, and it is so decidedly first in this respect that no other in the empire can bear even a distant comparison with it. Nearly 20,000 of its inhabitants owe their means of existence to this branch of human industry. Being, as it is, the chief seat of manufacture and internal commerce, Moscow has an important voice in the administration. This voice it is true, is seldom loud, but it is listened to, and respected. The difference that exists in this respect between Moscow and St. Petersburg is sufficiently proved by the fact that the former has never had a German governor appointed over it, while St. Petersburg has usually foreign commanders. A native Russian is always selected for Moscow, because she will endure no other. The city even stands upon its dignity sometimes, takes something amiss, and asks an explanation, as if it had, like an English city, old privileges to guard. It is related that when on the occasion of the inundation in St. Petersburg, in 1824, the minister wrote to the citizens of Moscow, to call on them to advance money, he made use of some unsuitable expressions, of which an explanation was demanded before the supply was granted.

With reference to art, literature, and fashion, and all therewith connected, Moscow stands in relation to St. Petersburg much as the latter city does to Paris. As St. Petersburg hates and despises Paris, and yet follows Parisian fashions unconditionally, and awaits with impatience the coming of the first steamboat in spring that shall bring them, so does Moscow hold St. Petersburg in abhorrence, yet purchases of no milliner who does not write up "*de Petersbourg*," and receives no artist with favour who has not previously been lauded there. After passing an examination, and after having been approved of in St. Petersburg, his patent is ratified, and he may finish his tour with applause throughout the empire. I heard in Moscow a violinist, a Mr. H., who had been tolerated in Paris, and had in consequence been received with rapturous applause in St. Petersburg. Mr. H.'s fortune was now made for Russia, and he of whom no mortal had ever before heard any thing extraordinary, was all at once raised to the rank of a celebrated artist, who stood before the public of Moscow bashfully wondering at his own sudden fame, while praise, applause, and garlands were raining down in abundance on him; his merit was exalted to the skies, and the good folks of Moscow, with one voice, swore he was the first violinist in the world.

As Moscow appears only as a provincial city in its public amusements, so it has likewise a provincial air in its streets and coffee-houses. After the concert of Mr. H. we were made to feel this, by finding in the coffee-houses at ten o'clock, none but a few French and Germans gossiping and drinking the champagne of the Don. The Russian waiter, of whom we



inquired how it was that no Russians were to be seen, replied that it was always so; the Nyemtzi (Germans) liked "*prasgovorni*" (talking two or three together), but that Russians only drank tea to throw themselves into a perspiration, and then went to bed. At eleven o'clock all Moscow is asleep, and it is difficult to get a conveyance, while in St. Petersburg they are to be had at every hour of the night. In St. Petersburg the shops are not opened, even in spring, before nine in the morning, whereas in Moscow purchases may be made two or three hours earlier.

## AQUEDUCTS.

Very few houses in Moscow possess wells; nearly all the water used is drawn from the few stone basins in the streets. The manner in which the people draw the water is extraordinarily rude and simple. They drive the carts on which the barrels are placed close to the basin, bale out the water in little pails to which long poles are fastened, and from the pails, without any medium of spout or funnel, into the square bung-hole of the cask. Their aim is certainly remarkably good, and the greater part of the water goes into the barrel, but enough runs over, notwithstanding, to make a constant swamp in the summer, and a very inconvenient hill of ice in the winter. This waste is the more unpardonable, because the water is brought, with much labour and great cost, by the canal of *Sukhareva Bashnia*.

This *Sukhareva Bashnia*—that is, the tower of Sukhareff—was originally a building erected by Peter the Great for the administration of the Strelitz, and was named after a certain Sukhareff, who, though himself a Strelitz, did the emperor good service during the revolt of those Russian pretorian bands. It is a lofty square tower in the Garden-street, standing in the centre of a long building, and serves, as before said, as a reservoir for the city. The water from which the tower is supplied rises seventeen versts from Moscow, is brought by an aqueduct to within three versts, and there raised by a steam-engine erected by the Emperor Nicholas, and impelled into the basin of the tower, whence it is carried to the different basins in the city. The water pours into the basin of the tower from a silver vessel, placed on one side, which sends out constantly fifty streams, each an inch in diameter. The Russian eagle, likewise of silver, expands his wings over these fifty fountains; and on the wall above all, the picture of a saint is suspended, under whose auspices all this labour is carried on. Such a guardian is placed over every spring used by man in Russia.

## MOSCOW AFTER THE CONFLAGRATION.

The architecture of Moscow, since the conflagration of 1812, is not quite so bizarre as, according to the accounts of travellers, it was before that event; nevertheless it is still singular enough. In 1813 the point chiefly in view was to build, and build quickly, rather than to carry any certain plan into execution; the houses were replaced with nearly the same irregularity with respect to each other, and the streets became as crooked and tortuous as before. The whole gained little in regularity from the burning, but each individual house was built in much better taste, gardens became more frequent, the majority of the roofs were made of iron painted green, a lavish use was made of pillars, and even those who could not be profuse erected more elegant cottages. Hence Moscow has all the charms

of a new city, with the pleasing negligence and picturesque irregularity of an old one. In the streets of modern Moscow, we come, now to a large magnificent palace, with all the pomp of Corinthian pillars, wrought-iron trellis-work, and magnificent approaches and gateways; and now to a simple whitewashed house, the abode of a modest citizen's family. Near them stands a small church, with green cupolas and golden stars. Then comes a row of little yellow wooden houses, that remind us of the old Moscow; and these are succeeded by one of the new colossal erections for some public institution. Sometimes the road winds through a number of little streets; we fancy ourselves in a country-town; suddenly it rises, and we are in a wide "place," from which streets branch off to all quarters of the world, while the eye wanders over the forest of houses of the great capital; we descend again, and come in the middle of the town to the banks of a river planted thickly with gardens and woods.

#### THE CHOLERA HOSPITAL.

Among the gigantic erections just mentioned is the Cholera Hospital, destined for the maintenance and education of orphan children. It owes its origin and its name to the cholera that raged in Moscow in 1830. Its ravages left many children without parents. A wealthy prince, Gagarin, took charge of thirty of these poor orphans; gave up to them a wing of his house, engaged male and female teachers for them, and thus formed a private benevolent institution. When it became more extensive, the crown came to his assistance, and, after the death of the beneficent prince, took the whole establishment upon itself. An enormous house—one of those houses like the quarter of a city, built in Catherine's time—was purchased from Count Apraxin, and in it are now maintained 200 orphan boys and as many girls. The boys are kept there till they are prepared for the university, and the girls till they are fit for governesses.

#### RUSSIAN THIEVES.

Shortly before my departure from Moscow, I had the good fortune to catch a thief who was just about to rob me in a regular Russian style. I had wearied myself with running about the town, and had thrown myself upon the sofa behind a large screen, when I heard some one come into the room and begin rummaging among my moveables, evidently not knowing that any one else was near. I called out "Kto tam?" (Who is there?) "It is I," was the answer. The rascal wanted to cheat me into the belief that he was my servant; but when I looked from behind the screen to get a nearer view of this "I," I saw quite another physiognomy than any I was used to. The fellow let fall the linen he had scrambled together, and cried out with a look of anxious and excessive humility, "Ah, excuse me, sir; pray forgive me. I have made a mistake. I thought this was No. 12, and I see it is No. 11," added he, looking at the number of the room as if quite surprised. As I could not prove his guilt, I let the rogue go with a warning to look at numbers a little more carefully in future; but I held it a duty to other travellers, to awaken the landlord's attention to the unobservant eyes of his servant. In no country are people safer from deep-laid, long-concerted plans of robbery than in Russia; but in no country does opportunity make so many thieves,

nowhere are picklocks and snappers up of unconsidered trifles more frequent. To pilfer or pick up unexpectedly some useful article, to *borrow* for an uncertain time, to make mistakes in the numbers of the rooms, these are their usual ways of stealing, from which one is not secure even with the best-natured of "old cucumber-eaters," who, when detected in the most glaring theft, will simply tell you of some article or other "God has given it me."

## CUCUMBER-WATER.

The Russians are often called "onion" Russians by the Germans, from the quantity of onions they eat: they might for the same reason be called "cucumber-eaters;" for they undoubtedly devour more of this vegetable than any other European people, particularly in Moscow, where all Russian peculiarities more abundantly flourish than elsewhere. Cucumbers and cucumber-water are to be had at every corner. The former are eaten in many ways, though rarely prepared in a very inviting manner; the latter is drunk in abundance as a cooling beverage. In the greater number of taverns, large vessels full of it are always in readiness, and at many a post station the starved traveller is reduced to cucumbers and cucumber-water as the only attainable refreshment. In the streets they carry about pails full of cucumbers, neither salted nor seasoned with any other condiment, and with bundles of wet bunches of bass, they continually moisten and refresh the insipid fruit. In the same way many other raw vegetables of an insipid sourish taste are carried about;—sourness is quite characteristic of the Russian national table; the various kinds of berries and small pears which are brought in enormous quantities from the Ukraine are sour, and so are the very favourite "*matshonniye yablok*" (raw apples), preserved in the same way as the cucumbers, and so are many other fruits of the same kind. The Ryāsan apples are a very peculiar species. They are allowed to freeze in winter for sale in summer; they look in this state like baked apples, but yield an abundance of sweet and refreshing juice, while in the unfrozen state they are very dry and quite destitute of flavour.

## DIALECTS.

Among the many things that surprise foreigners in Russia none do so more than the extraordinary uniformity of dialect throughout the empire. In a tract of more than 400 miles in extent, none but a practised ear can detect any difference even of pronunciation. When I have questioned Russians about a Moscow dialect, they denied the existence of any important distinction between the speech of Moscow and that of St. Petersburg. I only noticed one or two trifling differences; one was that the Moscovites say "*ento*" for "*etto*" (that), with a few trifling peculiarities of the same kind.

## TRADING BOYS.

We have often remarked that the talent for trafficking lies deep in the Russian blood. The merest children show an address and dexterity in commercial dealings such as are displayed only by long-practised traders with us. The German understanding ripens slowly, but then it arrives at a high state of maturity; the Russian (mercantile) understanding does not



seem to want ripening, it is born ripe and ready, but does not in the end go as far as the beginning promised. With some very able, there are also in Germany, some astoundingly stupid traders. This does not seem to be the case in Russia; there, every one seems born with a like portion of wit. In Moscow I found this opinion many times confirmed. I went one day into a wax-chandler's shop on the invitation of a mannikin of seven years old. With us at such an age, children are helpless, timid, childlike, and childish; in Russia they are adroit, cunning, and too clever by half. Dressed in his little blue caftan of precisely the same cut as that worn by men, the infant merchant entreated me to enter his shop, bowing in the same obsequious fashion as his elders; and when I told him that I was not going to buy but only wanted to look at his wares, he answered as complaisantly as his papa could have done. "Pray oblige me by looking at whatever you please." He showed me all his stock, opened every press with a dexterous willingness, which I could not but admire; knew not only the price of every sort of candle, but the whole capital invested in the stock; the yearly returns, the wholesale price, the profit, at so much per cent.: in a word, he had in every respect the demeanour of an experienced trader. Just such children as these are often found at the money-broker's table; and at an age when with us they would hardly be trusted with a few pence, a considerable capital will be committed to their care. Many similar millionaires *in spe*, are running about the streets with fruit, honey-cakes, kwas, and so forth; who jingle their money, and handle their reckoning-boards with so much address, that it is easy to comprehend how so many opulent individuals issue from their ranks. In Russia the greater number of wealthy merchants must look back to the streets and pedler's booth for their youthful reminiscences, when all their merchandise consisted of picture-books, kwas, or wax-tapers.

#### STREET LIGHTING.

The streets of Moscow are as dark as those of St. Petersburg. There are few lamps except those suspended in the heavens, and when the Calendar does not promise moonlight, they look for long days in summer, and for aurora borealis and the reflection of the snow in winter, or for some other provision of kind mother Nature wherewith to lighten their darkness. Nothing is more striking to a traveller coming from the gas-lighted streets of English, German, and Netherlands cities, than the fact, that the Russian people have for the most part no other illumination in their streets than the wolves and bears have in their forests; although, in many places, man has made his dwelling there for a thousand years. The extravagant extent of the Russian cities does indeed render the introduction of a regular system of lighting, or any improvement in the street police, a matter of extreme difficulty; while in Germany, on the contrary, the very limited spaces are often found great obstacles to the same wholesome regulations. The denizen of a Russian city must pay at least ten times as much as a German, to have his house in equal order, and his streets equally well lighted.

During our stay in Moscow, there occurred some of the "*zarSKIYE dni*" (imperial days), which are celebrated by street illuminations. The Russians divide their holidays into church holidays, and the so-called imperial

days. These ordinary illuminations on extraordinary days, are yet more dismal affairs in Moscow than in St. Petersburg. A few tallow-candles flickering in earthen-bowls on the trottoirs, by order of the police, seemed placed there for no other purpose than to make the darkness more visible, and have no better effect in muddy weather than a Will-o'-the-wisp on marshy ground. These tallow Jack-o'-lanterns are used for "illumination" in the capitals of all the governments on similar occasions.

Of illuminations on a grander scale, and against their will, the people of Moscow have had enough. Constantinople excepted, there is, perhaps, no city in Europe that has been so often burnt to the ground. By the Tartars alone it was well singed more than twelve times. Mongolian, Polish, French, and other storms of war, electrical and other causes, may have changed the city to a heap of ashes about as often. It is with good reason, therefore, that fire is held in especial dread, and particular measures of precaution adopted. One is, that every house has a gigantic ladder placed against it, reaching from the ground to the roof. According to the police regulations, these ladders should be double, and very strongly made, kept in good order, and supported against the walls by long thick props or stays. But as they are constantly exposed to the weather, of course they are soon rotten, and must require very sharp overlooking, not to do more harm than good, when they are really needed.

The best security against the spread of injury by fire, has been adopted since the conflagration of 1812, namely, the more frequent erection of stone houses, the granting certain privileges to such buildings, and the prohibition of wooden houses within certain districts. Of the 12,000 dwelling-houses that Moscow contains, about two-thirds are built of wood, nevertheless, and only one-third of stone and brick. The stone is a snow-white and very soft limestone found in the neighbourhood of Moscow, so soft, indeed, that it may be wrought with a hatchet, and is full of countless fossil remains.

#### PRICES OF LESSONS.

Moscow offers another proof that the present is the golden age for teachers in Russia; she possesses few, desires them much, and pays them highly. Private teachers, who with us are but an insignificant class of pedestrians, are here not seldom seen to drive four horses, and it is usual for those who have taught successfully for twenty years or so, to have laid by a provision for their future lives; whereas, in Germany, they would at most have been able to maintain themselves during that time. Ten rubles is the price of an ordinary lesson from an "examined" teacher. Students get in general five rubles. I know some examples of professors obtaining as much as sixty and seventy rubles a lesson. In the arts, the price is about twenty or twenty-five rubles. Many persons, but little versed in the principles of national economy, are accustomed to think that countries where the necessaries of life are dear must be rich countries. According to such a standard, a similar conclusion might be drawn of the uncommon prosperity of science and knowledge in Moscow, where their priests are so lavishly rewarded. In the street of Dimitrius there was no end of the "*Utshebnyaya Savedenie*" (educational establishment), and most of the establishments had doctors and court counsellors at their head.

## NEW RUSSIAN SAINTS.

At a bookseller's in Moscow, I saw a picture of the canonization of Mitrophan, the newest saint in Russia. The emperor was represented kneeling with his whole suite on the ground before the coffin of the saint, which the collected clergy were blessing. Although Mitrophan has only enjoyed the honours of saintship six years, his empire is already very great, and he is much in fashion. His picture is every where sold, and many wear it on their breasts; and truly this is not wonderful, seeing that since he arose from the earth, Mitrophan has wrought sixty-eight well attested miracles, which are all set down in a book! St. Mitrophan is the newest saint in Russia, but he will not be the last. I was informed by a Russian, that in the environs of St. Petersburg alone, he knew of many graves of pious priests, whose reputation was beginning to spread among the people. The next saint will perhaps be the metropolitan Plato; who is not unknown to us, by his excellent sermons. A visit to his grave is said to be efficacious for the toothach. There is some wood over the grave, I know not whether a cross or only a rail, from which a splinter bitten is an infallible remedy. It is said that half the wood has been already bitten away.

In the same shop I also saw a copy *à la Mushik*, of Bruiloff's celebrated picture in St. Petersburg, and to the imagination displayed in the copy, the original must strike its flag. Mount Vesuvius was planted in the middle of the paper, and was working terrible mischief on all sides. It was throwing up not only stones but rocks and mountains, while a stream of lava as broad as the Ganges was pouring from the summit. The little town of Herculaneum was painted after the model of Moscow, and the twenty cupolas were all split and gaping as at a given signal. The pillars fell regularly right and left, like grass under the mower's scythe; and the rows of houses swayed hither and thither, like a forest moved by the wind. Most pitiful was the plight of poor humanity. Out of every window a pair of arms was stretched towards heaven, and legs and arms most wofully crushed lay about in hundreds. There were copies from several other pictures, all "translated" in the same style, to meet the level of taste and intelligence among the people.

## RUSSIAN ECCENTRICS.

There are not upon the whole many elements in the character of the Russian nation, for the production of extraordinary psychological appearances and originality of character; and just as little is their political constitution favourable to such growths. Only an intellectually-gifted nation, with great depth of character, is fitted to bring forth men, who, partly as men of genius, partly as originals, must choose their own paths and set at nought prevailing manners and fashions. A political constitution that will afford room for free individual development is also necessary; for, where mental growth is fostered, there also will mental extravagance find place. In Russia, where there are few persons who feel the vanity of this world very deeply, and where independence of character is not very general, but all



rather adopt themselves with wonderful suppleness to the prevailing mode; where the whole energy of the upper classes is directed to the same end, to labour in the state machine in the capital, and in the several governments; and where very few live apart as independent citizens among these smooth, unscrupulous, easy-going Russians, originality or eccentricity of character is almost as rare as creative genius.

In this respect as in very many others, the Russian nation is a direct contrast to the English, which may be called the nation of eccentricities and originality, in which nothing is exactly as it should be, while the other is evidently a nation of conformities, in which every thing comes alike, and by which original and self-dependant appropriation of any kind is very ill received. However, Russia is a large country, and the population is numerous, so that here and there will still be a departure from the given model. The majority of such originals is to be found among the wealthier classes, whose opulence gives them independence and leisure enough to give way to their caprices and means to purchase the toleration of others.

Living oddities enough there are in Russia, who might be mentioned if properly allowed, but the dead, under certain conditions and limitations, may be considered as a kind of psychological common property, and I will here instance a few, of whom anecdotes are related in Moscow, and who may serve as a supplement to the description of manners of the higher classes in Russia.

Prince N. was governor in one of the eastern provinces, and had gained universal respect and love in the course of his administration, but finding under length the climate under 53° north latitude insupportably warm, he returned to a private station and took up his abode in St. Petersburg. Even in the severest winter in that cold land, where according to Herodotus, men, at certain seasons, are changed into wolves, bears, and other beasts, he never wore any fur, and under 15° cold of Fahrenheit he was often seen in the streets without hat or coat in his shirt-sleeves. So at war was he with warmth that he would never suffer the wing of his house, where his own apartments were situated, to be heated, and generally kept the window open, so that mountains of snow had to be swept out of his cabinet. A person living on such familiar terms with beasts and his court could of course keep up but little intercourse with warm-blooded human beings without a special provision for their comfort. In a well heated fire-house the prince caused a number of warm pelouses of all forms and sizes to be kept, and in these his servants perched up his visitors before they entered the chambers of the winter prince. In a large assembly of Herodotus's bears, wolves, and foxes, the only undesignated man must have looked singular enough. His love of cold was not the only peculiarity of the prince. He had a tenderness for the Tatar and Kirgizian kitchen, and all his food was prepared in their fashion. This fancy was by no means agreeable to the friends and relations who could not avoid meeting round his table once or twice a week, and they were therefore under the necessity on these occasions of smuggling in two or three European dishes made by their own cooks, under the pretence that they were some new discoveries of the French cuisine that he must taste.

His inclination to the heathen Kirgizian went, however, no further than their kitchen; in other respects he was a pious Greek Christian—heard

mass daily in his private chapel, and in his walks knelt down conscientiously in the dirt before every church to cross himself and say a prayer. A multitude of sacred pictures hung in his apartments and in his private cabinet, and the walls were covered with saints from top to bottom. None were well received by him who did not cross themselves and bow down before every picture in every room. If his little grandchildren ran through the rooms to greet him without performing this ceremony they were always sent back again with a sharp reprimand, to salute the saints before they were allowed to kiss his hand.

A more praiseworthy quality was his great benevolence, which was displayed at times in a rather peculiar fashion. Bread he frequently distributed in his courtyard or in the streets with his own hands. Once he was driving through the "*Simoi ploshtshad*" (victualling market) at Michaelmas, and hearing a prodigious cackling of geese, it came into his head to treat all the poor of his quarter to roast goose. Hereupon he purchased the whole stock of three or four hundred geese, and ordered his own elegant servants to drive them home; but seeing they did not get on very well with the business, he got out of his carriage, borrowed a stick from a peasant, and, followed by his splendid coach-and-four and an army of gaping rabble, played the gooseherd from one end of the town to the other. Having reached his palace, he caused all the hungry stomachs round to be assembled in his courtyard, and with a liberal hand divided the cackling rôtis among them. In the midst of the diversion, his wife, one of the greatest dames in the city, who did not live in his house, although he was on the best terms with her, drove into the courtyard. The prince, who could not resist the opportunity of teasing her, flung a number of the screaming brood into the gay carriage, and then set on a pack of beggar-boys to go and pluck them from among the silken robes of his frightened consort.

A little while before his death he had the pleasure of winning a lawsuit against the chief of the police, whom he had long solicited in vain for permission to drive in the streets of the capital in a troika with three horses abreast, more than two horses abreast being prohibited in the city. He had spent a great sum of money, and set his whole very considerable body of friends to work to obtain this mighty privilege. It was granted at last as a special favour to him only, and he drove about in St. Petersburg a while in triumph, till one day he was honoured with six abreast, and lodged where neither heat nor police could vex him more—in the Newsky churchyard.

One of the most noted eccentrics of the Emperor Alexander's time belonged to a family not reckoned among the nobles, although one of the richest in the land. All the members of this family are said to have shown some singularity in their demeanour. The person of whom we are about to speak was the singular son of a very singular father, the brother of two originals, and the father of several children noted for whims and spleen. His wife he chose in the following manner. When he had resolved on marrying he would not venture on any of the St. Petersburg fair ones, but sent an order to the overseer of his estates to hold a general review of all the maiden serfs between the ages of sixteen and eighteen years, and to send him three of the handsomest and best conducted, which was done accordingly, and their lord selected one to be his better half. When he announced his intention to the girl, who supposed she had been sent for only to fill some

menial office, she was so frightened that she ran away, crying "I must not, I won't." With some difficulty the servants dragged her from under the wooden benches in the kitchen, where she had sought refuge, to instal her as mistress of the house. As soon as she had mustered up courage to meet her fortune all went on swimmingly. With the help of teachers she polished up, with a rapidity possible only to those formed of such pliable stuff as the Russians are, into an admired and welcome member of a gay circle, and her graceful and pleasing exterior soon bore no traces of her peasant birth. Once only, and that was at the birth of her first child, she ran some risk of being dethroned by her husband. A few drops of some narcotic had been prescribed for the child to lull it to repose in some trifling indisposition. The inexperienced mother administered the dose so effectually that the repose became eternal. The agonized father, in his first fury, would have done his wife some injury had he not been withheld by a lady who was much with her as companion and counsellor, and who dragged him before the picture of a saint, where she made him swear that he would do his wife no harm, but rather spare and comfort her, which oath he faithfully kept. His wife afterwards brought him many children in place of the lost one. As his daughters grew up, being pretty and rich, many a young officer cast loving eyes upon them; but the father would not hear of such a thing as marriage, and never invited a young man to his house, nor permitted his daughters to go to a ball. A proposal of marriage drove him quite beside himself, even the most advantageous; however, one general after another contrived not the less to steal all the daughters successively out of the house.

Every day at a certain hour he went to take a walk on the Neva Prospekt. Here he had several acquaintance; an Italian, a German, an artist, or an officer; with whom he conversed with great animation walking up and down. But they were only promenade friends; he had no other business with them, and never asked them to his house. At the end of the promenade he generally went into a coffee-house or confectioner's and gave his friends a splendid breakfast. It was his law, that the same Prospekt friend was not to make his appearance there two days running. If one of them ventured to do so, he was in disgrace, and had long to wait and manœuvre before he was honoured again with a salute from the old humorist, or an invitation to join his walk or his breakfast. When he dined in his own house, whether guests were present or not, he had all the dishes put on the table at once, and then it was necessary to work away and lose no time, for in half an hour they were all cleared away again, and satisfied or unsatisfied every body must wipe his mouth and say grace.

After the death of his wife, his life seemed embittered by constant uneasiness and dread. As if he feared attempts at murder, he used the precaution, said to have been taken by some tyrants, of changing his sleeping-room every night; and so arranged his sitting-room, that he could remain concealed for a while from every one who entered, or withdraw altogether unobserved. It was divided into a number of small spaces by silk hangings; he sat now in one and now in another, occasionally drawing back the curtains to call out to the servants in attendance, "Are you there, Feodor?" or, "What is the matter, Paul? What noise was that?"

The death of this man was yet more singular than his life. Like most Russians, he was passionately attached to the emperor. This feeling was



the stronger in his case because he had been loaded with benefits by his imperial master. He one day heard the news of Alexander's death while walking on the prospekt. The shock was so powerful that he could scarcely reach his home. On entering, he uttered with a deep sigh the words "*Gossudar umer*" (The emperor is dead), and fell senseless to the ground. He was raised, but breathed his last shortly afterwards in the arms of his family.

He was said to be no solitary example of a broken heart for the loss of Alexander. Many were mentioned both in St. Petersburg and in Moscow; and a Russian assured me that he would venture any wager, that if all the deaths from this cause throughout the empire were reckoned together, they would amount to above a hundred. Perhaps this is the strongest instance on record of attachment to the head of the state.

In Moscow, whither so many retreat who cannot or will not fall in with the reigning tone in St. Petersburg, persons of eccentric character swarm more than elsewhere. I heard, among others, of a wealthy man, whose property would maintain hundreds in comfort, who has so great a disgust to food as to eat only three times a week, and justifies this barbarous treatment of his stomach simply by the observation, that it is a more than brutal custom to eat as people generally do. The whole business of eating is so offensive to him, that none of his dependants dare practise it in his presence, and he cannot be of a dinner-party any where, without jesting at and mocking at more plentiful feeders.

Some time ago, there lived in Moscow a lady who swam against the stream in a very odd manner, although women in general are much less subjected to those whims than men. This lady, Countess Z—, had a quarrel with the sun himself, and made it the whole business of her life to avoid him. From one year's end to another, as soon as the sun rose, and others began their day's employment, she went to bed and made her reappearance with the stars. At seven or eight in the evening she breakfasted, and then traversed the dark streets attended by her servants bearing lanterns, and paid visits, which in St. Petersburg and in Moscow at that time did well enough, as few parties of any kind began before eleven. At one in the morning she dined, either at home or in company, where the supper of others was to her the noontide meal. After that she read and wrote in her cabinet till the day became too unbearably active and noisy, and drove her to take refuge in the world of dreams. No one could ever guess the motive of her abhorrence of what all nature loves so well. If fame did not bear witness that the countess had been endowed with beauty as well as with eccentricity, one might have thought that she dreaded the all-seeing eye of Helios. It is rather singular that she has founded no sect of day-sleepers in St. Petersburg at least, where she passed the latter years of her life, and where the winter days are so very detestable, while the nights of summer are so very agreeable. However, she died, the only votary of her own habits—of paper-chewing. She had contracted the evil habit of seizing on all the paper-cuttings that lay in her way, and eating them. In defiance of all medical warning she indulged this propensity till she entirely destroyed her health. After her death, her physician, according to a long standing compact, pierced her through the heart. She had always been haunted by the fear that she should be buried alive, and had bestowed a high recompence on the physician, and obliged him to swear that he would do her this service when she should be dead according to the best of his knowledge and belief.

At a subsequent period, I saw the house and grave of one of Russia's most distinguished and certainly noblest originals, Count E—, who had lived a considerable time in, some said voluntary, and others forced, exile. He had formerly played a distinguished part in St. Petersburg, but latterly avoided it. The poor, whose best friend he was, said that he did so because he detested the way of life there of the rich and great; but some people asserted that it was because he had committed some crime in company with his brother, which was not more plainly pointed out, as it would hardly have found credence of a man at whose interment all the poor cried out unanimously "*Nashe otez umer, nashe otez umer*" (Alas, our father is dead). It is enough to say that the count and his brother were imprisoned for three years, and that the one left his place of confinement a madman, and the other a confirmed humorist. In the place he had chosen for his retreat, he built a large house in the worst part of the town, among the poorest part of the population, and surrounded it with buildings of various kinds, and fine gardens. He might well be called the "King of the Poor," as all, but especially poor artists and artisans, found the friendliest reception from him. About persons of higher rank he troubled himself but little, and kept up no kind of intercourse with them. His passions for building, mechanics and projects of all kinds, joined to his kindness of heart and great wealth, naturally drew about him numbers of schemers and adventurers of various kinds. He was surrounded by a crowd of busy people of all nations, and his usual table companions were a Russian of Tartar descent, a German domestic physician, an Italian advocate, and a man of business, Greek and Polish stewards and commissaries, and a French architect. With the assistance of these people, he bought lands, built houses, made machines, dug canals, &c.; the centre of all this manifold activity being still his house in the poorest quarter of Odessa. Here all that was to be put in action elsewhere, was planned and tested. Besides all the artisans employed without the house, he kept a hundred workmen in his courtyards, constantly employed in his service. He had three smithies, a large carpenter's shop with its numerous workmen, and masons, gardeners, and cabinet-makers, without number. To all their workshops the count had subterraneous passages from his own cabinet, and liked to come upon his people by surprise. For his own and their misfortune, he understood a little of every thing himself, liked to have a hand in their work, and to have his own inventions executed. One of these inventions was some curious travelling carriage, furnished with every possible convenience, which employed his coachmaker three years. It was admitted to be the most perfect thing of the kind possible, and was then put into a coach-house and never once made use of.

The outside of his house was distinguished by a monstrous tower-like chimney, painted and carved like an obelisk with the strangest hieroglyphics, which gave rise to a belief among the superstitious that he had intercourse with evil spirits.

Count A— was perhaps the most comprehensive collector that ever existed. There was scarcely a class of objects, living or dead, to which he had not devoted a division of his museum. Of shells, insects, plants, birds, and minerals, he had great quantities, and some of great value. The greater part of the collection of the celebrated circumnavigator Foster, was in his possession. His collection of precious stones was one of the

completest that had ever been seen, and was valued at a million-and-a-half of rubles. He was continually increasing and enriching it by the aid of the Jews of Odessa, from whom he purchased rings, necklaces, and bracelets, which he deprived of their stones to place in his cabinet. He possessed also a valuable collection of every kind of wood. To these he had allotted large spaces where they were garnered up, not in small specimens only, but in beams and whole trunks of trees. The rarest woods were found among them by the cabinet-makers after the count's death, when they were sold by auction. His collection of birds was so large, that he kept a stuffer constantly at work for him. Yet more even than objects of natural history, the productions of manufacturing industry seemed to interest him. He went so far in this respect, that it would be necessary to enumerate every article in a Leipzig fair, if we would name all the count's presses contained. He had samples of every possible cloth and stuff in pieces of four ells length. In order to ensure a supply of every novelty of this kind, he had correspondants in Paris, Brussels, Hamburg, and other towns, who sent him specimens of every kind, in pieces of four ells. He was a great connoisseur in the productions of the loom, and could give very interesting lectures on that subject when he opened his treasures to any one, which was very rarely the case. Those parts of his collections that he seemed to cherish most were his locks and his buttons. In the former, every possible kind of bolt and lock, secret and non-secret, was to be found; some, of his own invention. The button collection was probably unique. It contained the buttons of all the innumerable Russian uniforms, from the lowest soldier and clerk, to the greatest general and minister; all that are now or that ever were in use among men or women, from the most elegant little sleeve button, to the button as big as a plate worn in the last century; all and every button, in use in every nation wild or tame. It was a sure way to the count's favour to send him from some old wardrobe any form of button that he did not already possess. The count also played a little on the piano, and had therefore devoted one hall to musical instruments, in which the ceiling was thickly hung with fiddles, and the floor choked up with pianoes of the oldest and the newest models. The greatest intrinsic value was hidden in the drawers of a chest in his cabinet, where he had heaped together three hundred valuable snuffboxes, worth above a million.

His furniture magazine surpassed any thing of the kind Odessa had to show, and when on the purchase or building of a new house, a number of tables, chairs, and presses of various kinds were withdrawn, the diminution was scarcely perceptible. The furniture of his private cabinet was in the same taste as his chimneys, that is, covered with hieroglyphics, dragons' heads, and all kinds of fantastic carving. His collections of various kinds were indeed so numerous and so large, that his most intimate friends were very imperfectly acquainted with them. Some he showed so seldom, that his house physician in twenty-five years' saw the whole but once, and there was one room in his house that he never opened to any human being. What he did in this chamber or what it might contain was never known; of course his retainers whispered of some great mystery therewith connected.

Of the living part of his collection, besides the finest cattle, horses, sheep, and swine, he had three or four aviaries, wherein sung, chirped,



whistled, piped, and screamed, feathered throats of all species of the old world and the new. In his courts, above a hundred dogs, mastiffs, greyhounds, spaniels, and pointers, poodles, and what not, were scouring about; and thirty or forty were lodged in his own rooms. Their quarters were in the billiard-room, where they lay on fine carpets which the servants were obliged to lay down smoothly for their beds. Although the count, their master, admitted them to such great privileges, he kept up strict discipline among them, and administered the laws with his own hand. After dinner he took up a large whip, which indeed he seldom laid aside, any more than he did his huge bunch of keys, and looked about to see how matters had gone on in his absence, and woe to him who had sinned against the rules of cleanliness and propriety! Sometimes he would give his French, German, Tartar, Russian, and Italian friends a fête on the roof of a garden-house, which formed a kind of hanging garden with bowers, orange-trees, and fountains; and at these fêtes, rope-dancers, music, and ombres chinoises were never wanting. In one of his country houses he had made a kind of magic chamber at the end of a long suite of rooms, in which his servants set a wheel in motion that displayed a variety of figures in the brightest colours, and under a strong illumination, reflected them a hundredfold in the looking-glass walls of the chamber. The count then lay on his bed, at the further end of the dark suite of rooms, and feasted his eyes on the brilliant spectacle, in order, as he said, to fall asleep in the midst of agreeable images. A third country house boasted a fine collection of pictures, and a fourth one of nails and screws! of all sizes, from the manufactories of all countries.

However much money this man might lavish on his house, he wasted but little on his person. His whole dress was not worth ten rubles, and consisted usually of an old dressing-gown and drawers, and sometimes of a waistcoat and pantaloons, and most important of all, large fur boots, which he wore winter and summer, and often kept on even in bed. As the count had not firmness enough to refuse any kind of bargain or exchange offered by Jew or Christian, his treasury was often in a bad condition, notwithstanding his large revenues. At times he would not have a kopeck in his pocket, and be under the necessity of borrowing a few "blue notes" (five rubles) of his physician. This would put a temporary stop to his proceedings, and throw the whole household into despair. After a time, a quantity of corn sold from his estates, or some mortgaged village would bring in some hundreds of thousands; and then he was in the best humour again, and would say to his people, "Now, my children, let us go to work again. We have got a few kopecks again! Now hammer and forge, and plane away as fast as you can." Of the death of this interesting person, I could not, unfortunately, learn any particulars. His museum was broken up and sold by auction after that event.

## THE PEARL.

Some time before I went to Moscow, there died in a convent, whither he had retreated after the custom of the pious wealthy ones of his nation, a rich merchant, whose house had large establishments in Moscow, Constantinople, and Alexandria, and extensive connections throughout the East. Feeling the approach of age he had by degrees given up the toils

of business to his sons; his wife, by whose side he had passed through life, was torn from him by the angel of death; and the only beloved object, which even in the cloister was not divided from him, was—one large, beautiful oriental pearl!

This precious object had been purchased for him by some Persian or Arabian friend at a high price; and, enchanted by its water, magnificent size and colour, its perfect shape and lustre, he would never part with it, however enormous the sum offered for it. Perhaps in the contemplation of its peerless beauty, as it lay before him in his leisure hours, he recalled the events of his early life and the glories of the East, as he had formerly beheld them with his own eyes. The fair dreams of his youth might seem to him embodied in its gleaming beauty; enough—he fairly worshipped the costly globule. He himself inhabited an ordinary cell in the convent, but this object of his love was bedded on silk in a golden casket.

This *preciosa* and *ne plus ultra* of pearls was shown to few; many favourable circumstances and powerful recommendations were necessary to obtain such a favour. One of my Moscow friends, who had succeeded in introducing himself to the cell of Mr. —, and had received a promise that he should behold the pearl of pearls, informed me of the style and manner of the ceremony. On the appointed day he went with his friends to the convent, and found the old man awaiting his guests at a splendidly-covered breakfast-table, in his holiday clothes. Their reception had something of solemnity in it, and the breakfast passed off amid much talk about east and west, by way of prelude to the important occasion of their meeting. After breakfast, Turkish pipes and coffee were brought in; a sign was given for the domestics to withdraw, and Mr. —, who allowed no one to know where his treasure lay hidden, went himself into his sleeping cell, and brought out the casket wrapped in a rich covering. He first spread a piece of white satin on the table, and then, unlocking the casket, let the precious globule roll out before the enchanted eyes of the spectators. No one dared to touch it, but all burst into a general exclamation of admiration, and the old man's eyes gleamed like his pearl. After rolling it about, to his own great delight and that of his guests, for some time, he related its history, returned it to its golden bed, and carried it back to his hiding-place.

During his last illness the old humourist never let his pearl out of his bed, and after his death it was with difficulty taken from his stiffened fingers. It found its way afterwards to the imperial treasury, where it may now enjoy the admiration of the world, from which its old master so enviously withheld it.

#### A RUSSIAN AUTHOR.

I went one day into the shop of a bookseller in Nicolai-street, to provide myself with a new instrument for my discoveries in the streets of Moscow, I mean a new Russian vocabulary, which I used to learn by heart. The worthy trader made me pay five rubles for it, which was certainly much more than it was worth. I felt wroth at the imposition, and being resolved to indemnify myself one way or the other, I took a seat in his shop, and obtained all the information I could concerning the Moscow book trade.

From booksellers we came to bookmakers. He put me in mind of the

historian Polevoi, who lives in Moscow, and related his history to me. Polevoi was born nearer the Mongul hordes and Pekin, than to Paris and our other European Athens!—that is in Irkutsk. His father was a native of Kursk, and had settled as a merchant in the Siberian capital. His son, who obtained then nothing further than the ordinary information of a Russian merchant, returned to Europe, and came as a juvenile trader to Moscow. Here he began to profit by the great increase of booksellers' shops since 1812, reading most probably as the merchants of Gostinnoi Dvor are accustomed to do, sitting before the doors of their shops and reading aloud by turns. Among books, Karamsin's *History of Russia* was thus perused. The more interested he became in the history of his native land, the less satisfied was he with the insipid, uncritical representations of that author. He read in the mean time many other books, and studied in his shop, during the intervals of business, French, German, Italian, Greek, and Latin, devouring the literature of those languages, making extracts, annotations, criticisms, and proceeding in the usual course of an active mind on which so many new impressions are streaming. As some of his essays on these subjects met with applause in the journals in which they appeared, the wish arose in him to establish a journal of his own, and after the year 1822, his periodical, called *The Telegraph*, came into the world. In its pages he spoke pretty freely, and sometimes with warmth, on points relating to the history of his country. Filled with disgust at the every where bepraised old wife's fables of Karamsin, he could not help, in his journal, which moreover displayed for Russia a very unusually critical spirit, he could not help, I say, attacking this idol of the day, and exposed some of his countless blunders. Karamsin was at that time at the height of his renown, favoured by the emperor, and admitted into the first coteries of the nobles. His daughters bloomed among the most distinguished flowers of the capital, and his family was courted by many who aspired to high places. It may be imagined therefore what was thought of a Moscow trader, who dared to take exceptions at a man of such acknowledged learning and political influence. At first it only excited laughter, then, as a small party ventured to declare in his favour, murmurs; and when at last he brought about a considerable reaction, when the eyes of other persons began to open, and some to doubt Karamsin's infallibility, bitterness and hatred succeeded. This was the posture of affairs when the Polish revolution broke out. The government kept a watchful eye on all that could be supposed to have a dangerous tendency. Several schools were broken up after that event, strict measures were adopted with respect to domestic tutors, and the free and plain spoken Polevoi, among others, was invited by some of his patrons who wished him advancement (to the gallows) to repair to St. Petersburg, which he accordingly did in a well guarded kibitke, travelling night and day, with relays waiting for him all along the road.

Under certain circumstances a journey to pleasure-loving St. Petersburg may be pleasant enough, but Polevoi's might possibly be somewhat spoiled by the recollection of certain articles on Russian history. Arrived at the capital he underwent a severe questioning as an "unquiet head," but to every interrogatory he replied in the open and unembarrassed manner of one conscious of no wrong, and of an ardent attachment to his country. At length the powerful voice of a just man was heard through all the clamour of his accusers, and the sentence ran thus: "Let the author be set free, but his journal must be suppressed." He



was at liberty then to return to Moscow, but found it expedient to attend henceforth more to the sale of his plums, than to that of his writings. As original production was now impossible to him, he found a solace in translating the productions of others. One of his translations was Hamlet; it is said to be pretty good, and has been played more than once.

His forced journey to St. Petersburg had however a very disadvantageous influence on his position in society. The greater part of his former friends forsook him; all seemed to dread intercourse with a man who was out of favour with those in high places. It was a melancholy period for Polevoi.

At present his star is again in the ascendant, and the future looks brighter for him and his family. The change was brought about thus. As the Emperor Nicholas visited the exhibition of art and science at Moscow in the year 1835, he graciously called to mind the literary merchant who had been so sharply attacked by his courtiers in St. Petersburg, and as a token of grace caused it to be intimated to him, that he might publish an account of the emperor's visit to the exhibition, where his majesty had made many notable remarks. Polevoi naturally made the best use of the inspiration. The account was published in *The Bee*, which diligent insect conveyed it to the eyes and ears of the public and the court. The emperor sent him a diamond ring, and signified his approbation in other ways also. Polevoi has now again assumed courage; that brilliant ring seemed the promise of other brilliancies to come, and the more so as another star was paling in the horizon which shortly afterwards set. The poet Pushkin, who was then living, died in 1835.

To this author the emperor had confided the accomplishment of a favourite literary project, a life of Peter the Great, of whom he is a warm admirer, considering him as a heaven-sent genius for Russia's weal. Three years before, Pushkin had been entrusted with the task of collecting materials for this purpose. Time had been given, all the archives were opened, and a considerable yearly sum assigned him. Pushkin collected for three years, but nothing very important was effected, and whenever the emperor inquired about his proceedings, the answer was, "Pushkin is collecting." He seems to have shown himself very lukewarm in the undertaking, for, during his lifetime, it was privately intimated to Polevoi, that if he made application, the task would probably be made over to him. Polevoi had already sketched a kind of prologue to such a work, which he now laid before the emperor, with whose ideas it was found to correspond exactly.

Pushkin's death will most likely have decided the matter in Polevoi's favour; so he hopes at least. In the year of my stay in Moscow, his wife was to go to the neighbourhood of St. Petersburg for the advantage of sea bathing, whither he was to follow, and after undergoing his own course of vapour-baths in the antechamber of the court, to make a tour through Russia, and through other countries, and thus prepared to usher into the world his life of Peter the Great.

After hearing this sketch of Polevoi's own life from my bookseller, I was curious to make his acquaintance, and after thanking the dealer in literature for his information, took my leave, and put myself under the charge of the first *Isvoshtshik* I met, and went to pay my respects to the author.

I should not have ventured to present myself so unceremoniously to a Gottingen sage, unless I had had a handsomely sealed letter of introduc-

tion, or my pockets well lined, to pay my examination for a doctor's degree; but here, where every body is at all times ready to give a hospitable reception to visitors, such a thing may be ventured. I encountered Polevoi in all the heat of composition, and may have robbed the world of many an unborn thought by my entrance, for he immediately laid aside his writing materials, and I passed a very pleasant evening with him.

The round rosy cheeks that seem peculiar to the Russian merchants, have long since vanished from Polevoi's face, and with them the handsome bushy beard that usually adorns them. The cares and nightly watchings that so often accompany devotion to the muses, had made great ravages there. His fresh and blooming youth was revived in his children who were at play in the garden. He speaks French, and is familiar with German, English, Italian, Russian, Polish, and classical literature. Of Schiller and Göthe he spoke with the warmest enthusiasm, as well as of Herder's "Ideas," which he said were in the hands of all cultivated Russians. But speaking of Germany of the present day, he raised his hands above his head, and exclaimed, "My God, where has the genius of Germany hidden itself?"

He spoke with great admiration of the Polish poet Mickievitch, and thought that, since Byron and Göthe, no such genius had appeared.

In 1822, when the "League of Virtue" in Vilna was discovered, Mickievitch, with about forty other young men, were disposed of in different parts of the interior of Russia as tutors, secretaries, and so forth. Mickievitch came as assistant to the governor-general to Moscow, whence he made several journeys into the interior, and to Crimea, which place he celebrated in some very beautiful sonnets. When, in 1830, his distressed country called on all her children, whose death or banishment she was afterwards doomed to mourn, Mickievitch shared the latter fate, and went to Paris. His verses must have been beautiful, for while Polevoi spoke of them, he forgot the foreigner in me, and his national antipathy to the Poles, and seizing my arm, cried, "Ah, my God, if you could but understand that! Oh that is beautiful, magnificent, grand!"

The wife and children of Polevoi came in, and our literary conversation concluded with a cheerful tea *soirée*. I prolonged the evening visit the more willingly, because it was my last in Moscow: the next day I was to set off for the south.

When we hear a man much spoken of with whom we are not personally acquainted, our imagination generally forms a picture of him, which as often vanishes and is forgotten when he becomes known, and we find quite another being than the creature of our fancy. It is the same when we read the description of a country or place, before the place itself has been visited by us. The traveller finds something quite different from what he had expected. The thing is always a hundred thousand times more complete and perfect than any description, and each individual mind reflects things in a manner peculiar to itself. In contemplating the subjects themselves the descriptions are forgotten, or the representation seems so imperfect in the presence of the *represented*, that every one thinks himself at liberty to describe them again. As the remarkable features and peculiarities of Moscow are known amongst us but imperfectly, this is more likely to occur to the traveller there than elsewhere, and in the pictures here attempted of objects so often painted, indulgence may the more readily be hoped for.

## THE GERMAN PROVINCES ON THE BALTIC.

### LIBAU.

No host ever appeared to me so attentive to strangers as Mr. Meissel, of Libau. At night I always found upon the table by my bedside, not only a decanter of fresh filtered water—for at Libau all water must be filtered before it is fit to drink—but also a large flask of sweet beer. In the morning a well-filled tobacco-pipe lay before me, and a lad stood by my bedside holding a well-warmed dressing-gown and a pair of slippers, in which he caught me as I stepped out of bed. Detained by these and similar comforts, it was late before I found myself in the streets of Libau.

I could not as yet forget my voyage from Lubeck, for the whole world seemed revolving round me, and it was not till after I had taken a composing powder, that the town of Libau began to stand still, and to stop the whirling dance of its houses, churches, and streets, so that I could examine them at my leisure. The architecture of Libau is the same as that of Memel, Mitau, Windau, and almost all the little northern towns of the Baltic. It is as different from the style in which the Russian towns are built, as from that of the old German cities of Riga, Reval, Königsberg, and Elbing. The modern Russian architecture, which prevails not only in Moscow and St. Petersburg, but which all the larger towns of Russia are adopting, is particularly distinguished by a lavish abundance of pillars, by smooth roofs covered with green iron, by wide spacious streets, and a great regularity of plan; the gothic architecture of the old German towns by high pointed houses, by crooked narrow streets, and great irregularity. Libau and similar towns are built mostly of wood—the walls are thin—the houses are very broad, deep, and low, undecorated by pillars or balconies, but are very neat and cheerful. This kind of architecture prevails very much in the north, being well adapted to the climate and to the materials at hand. The houses, with the exception of a few belonging to the richest inhabitants, are of one story; they occupy an extraordinary space in consequence, and often inclose spacious courts. Of course such towns lose all stateliness and splendour of appearance, and from a distance are by no means so interesting as the German cities, with their gothic towers and gable roofs, or the Russian with their columns, domes, and cupolas; but the interiors of the houses are far more light, cheerful, and pleasing. There are no gloomy corners and dark poking holes to be found here, but every where large, light, airy spaces.

The environs of Libau are the most dreary and melancholy that can be



imagined, wide, flat naked, sand-wastes stretch on every side as far as the eye can reach. The only inducement that I can imagine to have attracted colonists to this desert is the advantage of a harbour formed by a small gulf or arm of the Baltic stretching into the land. The whole Courland coast from Memel to Cape Domessnaes, consists of a monotonous chain of sand-hills, which is only twice broken, once in the north by the river Windau, at whose mouth lies the seaport of that name, and once by the gulf or lake of Libau, into which flow several small streams.

The long narrow opening of this lake has been surrounded by wharfs and quays and serves as a most excellent and safe harbour for all small ships, but for large vessels it is not deep enough, and for those of a middling size it can only be kept serviceable by constantly clearing out the sand which the west wind drives into it. The lake itself, which is only seven miles long, and two miles broad, is called by the inhabitants of Libau, "the little sea." In spring, indeed, this little sea is often large enough to flood the whole of the surrounding country, and to render access to Libau from the land side very difficult.

The sand-banks that stretch along the whole coast of Courland are more inimical to the Libau shipping than the imperfections of the harbour, which can with labour and some difficulty be got over. As every storm alters their size and position, stopping the old channels and making new ones, and often giving the sand-banks the appearance of a double and triple row of barricades, it is very difficult for the pilots to guide the vessels through them, and many of the Libau ships, generally uninsured, lose the reward of long and arduous voyages when already in sight of their destined port.

The harbour of Libau possesses, however, the important advantage of being the most southern Baltic seaport belonging to Russia, and therefore becomes navigable earlier in spring than any other. The lake of Libau very soon throws off its winter covering, whilst the harbours of the Riga and Finland gulfs continue ice-bound for several weeks longer. Libau is usually open three weeks before Riga, and six before St. Petersburg. Of course this is a great advantage. Libau can earliest profit by the high prices of corn abroad, and many articles that do not admit of delay arrive at Riga and St. Petersburg over Libau. The first Messina ship usually anchors here, laden with the delicate fruits of Sicily, which are rapidly despatched to the northern capital in sledges over the glassy ice.

The trade of Libau would, however, be much more extensive than it is. If the town were not so very limited as to its privileges of importation, Herrings, salt, wines, and a few similar articles are alone allowed to be imported here. As therefore most ships coming in search of corn have to arrive in ballast, they naturally prefer a place where they may import the produce of their own country, and the trade of Libau suffers much in consequence.\* Libau, however, takes the first rank among the smaller Baltic seaports of Russia, and far exceeds Abo, Revel, and Helsingfors, in importance. The arrivals of ships in the course of a year generally amount to from 600 to

\*At St. Petersburg every thing may be imported which the Russian tariff does not regard as contraband. At Riga many things are excepted, as Libau, Renss, &c. many more, and a fourth class of wares may import only salt and herrings. The importation of the two last-named articles is permitted to all towns because they are among the first necessities of life in the Baltic provinces. The great commercial privileges of St. Petersburg may account for the fact that in all the small towns of the Baltic provinces similar establishments are met with in the great fancy shops, &c. of the capital.

350, and the capital yearly employed in trade exceeds 6,000,000 of rubles banco. The trade of Libau compared to that of Riga, is as one to eight; to that of Reval, Abo, and Helsingfors, as one to one-half; to that of Pernau, Narva, &c., as one to eight. It is of the western part of Courland and the northern part of Lithuania that the trade passes through Libau, which exports the flax and corn of this district, and supplies it with wine, salt, and herrings. Samogitia (the northern part of Lithuania), would naturally belong to the territory of Memel, but the political boundaries are so unfavourably fixed for this town as to draw from it a considerable portion of its natural trade. If Libau and Memel should ever belong to the same province, Libau would certainly decline and Memel rise.

As no navigable river runs past Libau, it is usually entered in winter by the snow road; and the Lettish and Lithuanian peasants may be seen arriving with long caravans of small sledges, each drawn by still smaller horses, laden with sacks of corn, and with a man to every four sledges. The whole caravan generally travels very fast, for in this country the rapidity of the transport increases with the length of the way. From Lithuania comes chiefly flax, wheat, linseed, and hemp, and from Courland rye, barley, and fine wool.

The merchants at Libau are, without exception, Germans. The English honour no cities with their establishments, except those of the first rank, as Riga and St. Petersburg; and the Russians have succeeded in establishing a mercantile house of eminence, even in the smallest places. Even those mediators who trade between the great houses and the peasants of the interior, are all Germans here. The three most important mercantile houses of Libau are those of Harmsen, Sörensens and Co., and Hagedorn. These three firms employ a yearly capital of upwards of 2,000,000 of rubles, and have, therefore, more than a third part of the entire trade of the place in their hands.

Not quite unimportant—"oh, most highly important!" would an indignant patriot of Libau cry, "are the ship-owners and the ship-building of Libau." The merchants of the town have 21 ships of their own—more, therefore, than those of Riga. Many ships are built for foreigners in the Libau wharfs, the builders and materials of which stand in great repute. The ship-builder Möwe built 41 ships in the year 1840, more than a third of which were for foreigners.

The citizens of Libau are as potent and respectable a body as those of most German cities, and their political organization is very similar to that of the old imperial city. They have also armed corporations like our own republics, and like many other towns of Courland and Livonia. They are divided into the red, green, and blue burgerguards, antique names and institutions which date more than a century back.

Each of these guards has its own laws and its own standards. To the one belong the married merchants and the burghers of the first guild, to the second the merchants' clerks, and to the third the mechanics of the second and third guild. These guards are bound in the first place to defend the town against an attack; and secondly, entitled to receive their sovereigns in solemn procession on their visits to Libau, and welcome them in the name of the town.

One of these guards (I believe the blue) is an equestrian body. It would be as well if their leaders sat firmer in their saddles than he who

fell from his horse at the last visit of the Emperor Alexander. The blue guards were stationed on parade before the house of the emperor, Major Friedrichs at their head. The emperor, who had just mounted his horse, intending to visit all the lions of the place, wished to have the major as his cicerone. He rode towards him, and cried in a somewhat loud and peremptory tone, "Major Friedrichs!" The major, who had never yet stood within reach either of a cannon or an emperor, was so astounded and overwhelmed with the thought of what might follow, that when he again heard his own insignificant name pronounced by so illustrious a mouth, it had as powerful and electrical an effect upon him as if a bomb had been discharged in his ear. He started back as if struck by lightning, and when the emperor once more turned round and called "Major Friedrichs!" he saw the gallant officer fall flat on the pavement in the excess of his respect.

The last powder *seen*—one cannot say *smelt*—by the red, blue, and green guards, was in the year 1831, when powder and balls were distributed amongst them for the defence of the town against the Poles. For five months all Courland was unanimous and united, like a house next door to a fire. Had the Poles come to Libau, the only cannons directed against them would no doubt have been those commemorated in the songs of our students:—"*Lasset die feurigen Bomben erschallen*," and the only blood spilt would have been that of the grape, with which the worthy citizens would have regaled and entertained the Poles as willingly and hospitably as any other guests.

#### THE INTERIOR OF COURLAND.

As I drove over the waste, sandy, rain-flooded plain into the interior of Courland, my Jewish coachman, who diligently stopped to drink at nearly every "Krug" or public-house on the way, offered me occasionally a dram of good Courland brandy, or a sandwich, or a fat well-smoked flounder, which he held by the tail, thrusting it into the window of the coach, or a fresh-baked, peppery, lard-cake, on a wooden plate. I was not, however, to be tempted, but bidding him regale on these dainties himself, drew back into the carriage, and wrapping myself in my travelling-cloak and my sulky humour, told him he might drive quickly or slowly, I did not care which.

The first place we reached was

#### GROBIN;

an unimportant town, chiefly inhabited by Jews. In early times, that is, in the time of the knights—for the history of Courland is not divided, like that of the rest of Europe, into ancient, middle, and modern ages, but into Knightly, Ducal, and Russian times—in the early knightly times, then, it was a much more important place. A commander of the order resided at the castle, and the town had even a harbour on the sea-coast, and traded like Libau. These times are now past, the harbour is choked up with sand, there are no merchants except such as vend matches, snuff, and pepper; and beside the ruins of the stately old castle, the chief magistrate of Grobin has built himself a neat little wooden house.



The Russian government has done nothing for Grobin. The French, however, so much given to ridiculous errors and blunders in topography and geography, have done this little town the honour of exaggerating it into an important place; for, in the year 1812, the despatches of Napoleon's generals enumerated among other triumphs, "the capture of the fortress of Grobin, the key to Courland and to the north." The place derives a little importance from its being situated near the juncture of two great roads; firstly, that of Mitau, the principal road of Courland, which intersects the whole country, joining Libau, Mitau, and Riga;—and secondly, the great Lithuanian road, which transports the produce of Western Lithuania to the sea.

My Jew informed me that the market of Grobin was not unimportant, that many different races, Lettes, Lithuanians, Gipsies, and Jews, always met there, and that the Shlakhtitzi, the petty nobility of Lithuania, enjoyed at the tribunal of Grobin, as in other towns of Courland, the privilege of the Carpet; that is to say, when they are flogged, they are allowed a carpet to lie upon, a privilege to which peasants and gipsies cannot aspire.

As I leaned out of the window of the coach in passing through Grobin, I saw the Jewesses sitting before their doors. All wore their peculiar oriental costume. I also noticed that the wheels of the coach every now and then struck on the stones of an old pavement, which lay everywhere buried underneath the deep sandy mud.

We now left the great road, and drove into the interior of the country by a narrow by-way. I had received letters of introduction, in Germany, to a distinguished family, which I was now proceeding to visit. These Courland by-ways, leading from estate to estate, not from village to village, for in this country there are no villages—are generally execrable. Upon the whole, however, they are better than those of East Prussia, and many other German provinces. They are exceedingly narrow; and on account of the frequent flooding of the whole country, they are raised like dykes, and the roads in consequence are generally called dams. I was told that for these excellent dykes, Courland was indebted to the zeal and watchful care of a former active and energetic governor.

We drove on rapidly, and reached in the evening the dwelling of the noble family whose acquaintance I was about to make. This estate was called Zierau. I shall not enlighten or entertain my reader, to whom I appear only as a describer of nations and countries, and who therefore has only general observations on politics, morals, manners, customs, natural features, statistics, &c., to expect from me, by a description of the feelings which the ever-dear name of Zierau awakens in me; but shall only recount to him such things as may excite a general, and in some measure a universal interest.

Τὸν δ' αὖ Νανσικάα λευκόλενος ἀντίον ἦνδα·  
 Νῦν δ' ἔπει ἡμετέρην τε πόλιν καὶ γαίαν ἰκάνεις,  
 Οὐτ' οὖν ἐσθῆτος δευήσεται, οὔτε τευ ἄλλου,  
 'Ὡν ἐπέοιχ' ἰκέτην ταλαπείριον ἀντιάσαντα.

What I learnt, how I lived there,  
 What hopes were mine, what joys there were,  
 What delights beyond expressing,  
 Would take me quite too long confessing.

It is enough, therefore, if I say I stepped gloomily from the carriage as I entered the castle, but soothed by the friendly air of the place, and hospitably greeted by the household Lares, I soon grew cheerful and contented in that domestic circle, and spent I know not how many weeks and months there, for who counts the days and years that pass over in undisturbed enjoyment?

Zierau, like all the noble mansions of Courland, round which revolve, not merely the entire social system, but almost the entire industry, cultivation, commerce, and refinement of the country, consists of a great number of buildings. Houses for guests, for stewards and other officers, storehouses, stables, manufactories, churches, mills, distilleries, and other buildings, to the number of twenty, thirty, or forty, are ranged round the principal building, which is the dwelling of the family. The cultivated circle of the House consists of the amiable family of the proprietor, of the physician and pastor of the estate, of the tutors and governesses of the children, of the relations and acquaintances of the family, who often reside with their wealthy kinsmen, and of other guests who may be present. The Livonian and Courland mansions are invariably as populous and lively as the villages are desolate and lifeless. From Zierau, where my residence was for some time fixed, I made many excursions into the interior, and visited many noblemen, merchants, and clergymen; growing thus gradually familiar with the spirit of the country, and learning to know the life, the manners, and customs, the general tone of its society, so as to be in a position to afford the reader a little insight. As the root and kernel of society must be hospitality, it is as well to begin with this virtue, which is, in fact, the most highly esteemed, and most practised virtue of this country.

#### NORTHERN HOSPITALITY.

It has been said that genuine hospitality exists only among uncivilized nations. The three Russo-German provinces of the Baltic, however, must be excepted, for there this virtue is most perseveringly practised by all ranks and classes of the inhabitants, but most particularly by the richest and most cultivated in the land.

It is impossible that Abraham could have opened his door, prepared his pallet, and slaughtered his lamb, for the poor wanderer who knocked at his gates, more willingly than the nobles feed the stranger, for whom they spread the banquet, and prepare the bedchamber.

A great deal of difference is generally observed between Spanish, French, English, and Italian hospitality. The stranger, who has once experienced that of the north is little inclined to acknowledge these distinctions, for he will think that there is no hospitality any where else. Our crowded populous countries, where each additional man that arrives squeezes those who were there before him, and where each man has to defend himself from his neighbour, will seem to him full of inhospitable egotism. Where there is a superfluity and overstock of men everywhere, each man naturally seeks to enclose himself in the narrow circle of his own immediate friends and acquaintance, and to keep off strangers.

The virtues of a nation are the effect of the circumstances under which they live. The scarcity of men in the north calls forth that cheerful hospitality which rejoices at the sight of every new face. In the west we see so many new human faces every day of our lives, that we should

often be very glad to get rid of them. Thus in the midst of our populous states, many retire eagerly to a solitary hermit-life while in the empty north, every one loves to surround himself with as much life and bustle and society as possible. Every corner is not crowded by candidates as with us, and every useful talent or acquirement is universally welcome, and finds every door open to it.

Besides, it is to be remembered that the gentlemen of the Baltic provinces get what they spend very easily. The bread, the corn, the fruit the vegetables grow up around them without their troubling themselves about the matter; the rubles and ducats roll into their chests of their own accord. The Lettes and Esthonians bake, brew, and roast for them; the merchant sends them wine, sugar, and coffee. Why should they not eat, drink, and make merry? Why should they not live, and let live?

To be sociable and hospitable, one must be in easy circumstances, and have plenty of leisure. With us no one has much leisure. Even the rich have plenty of occupations, and are anxious to be yet richer; even the independent gentleman has to alter, improve, speculate and arrange.

In Livonia and Courland what gentleman or lady values time? The whole day is made up of leisure. Their business is attended to by the steward, the merchant, and the advocate. No one looks at the clock, except to know when it will be dinner-time, or whether tea may be soon ordered up; no one looks at the almanac, except to learn how long it is till Christmas, or when Easter will be, or how many weeks it wants of the sea-bathing season, or when the next birthday is to be celebrated.

The landowners of the Baltic provinces are independent sovereigns. No one interferes with or controls them. Every Saturday they examine the lists of the dead and sick peasants, which are brought them by the physician; settle accounts with their stewards, secretaries, foresters, and magistrates; give audience to their peasants; issue such and such decrees, to execute which a hundred willing hands are immediately ready; and perhaps make a tour of their estate, to admire and enjoy the bounties of nature.

None of these duties, however, are so urgent that they may not be postponed, if necessary; and they are often attended to, in the presence, and with the assistance, of the guests. Even those who have something to do, as merchants, physicians, pastors, &c., carry on their affairs much more leisurely, and *con amore*, than with us. Every thing is taken easily, and plenty of serviceable subordinate hands are always ready to supply deficiencies; so that in the houses of the pastors, merchants, and citizens as in the palaces of the nobility, leisure and scope for the exercise of hospitality are not wanting.

With us, and still more with the English, a stranger is always in some measure a suspicious personage. People do not know where he comes from: they are afraid he wants something of them; they inquire after his family, his connexions, his purse, his standing in society, and till satisfied on all these points, every one keeps aloof from him. It is very different in the north. Every stranger, without exception, is welcome there. His situation, his rank, his origin, are touched upon with more than Homeric delicacy. If he needs help, he will be helped; and if he is personally an agreeable man, he will find a thousand sympathetic, bountiful, kindhearted beings, anxious to assist and oblige him. To be friendly and obliging to



strangers, is considered by every one as the first of duties, and the reputation of an "agreeable host" is one most anxiously sought for by all.

The master of the house puts aside his occupations, to be at leisure for the entertainment of his guests. The lady of the house conquers her indisposition to perform the duties of a kind hostess, and is justly praised and admired in proportion as, in spite of her delicate health, she exerts and sacrifices herself for strangers. Nay, if even in this country there are a few who perform less cheerfully and gracefully the duties of hospitality, there are none who do not acknowledge the sacredness of those duties, and endeavour to perform them with as good a grace as they can.

With us visits are often made, during which both host and guest appear to be sitting on thorns, because it is easy to see that the visit is not well-timed. "Excuse me, I disturb you." "If you will do me the honour another time. But pray stay a little longer, at least."

Such phrases are never heard in the north; visits there are always well-timed, and always in the highest degree welcome.

In Germany people thank a friend very politely for an invitation, and repay it by a visit of acknowledgment. People thank God that a call which lasted half an hour is over, and rejoice when an unavoidable entertainment is done with.

In the north, on the contrary, a guest receives a thousand thanks for the visit he pays, and it would be thought very absurd for him to profess gratitude for his food. There is no more certain way of obliging people, than by paying them plenty of visits.

If after an eight-days' call the guest wishes to depart, he is pressingly entreated to stay a few days or a week longer, and both guest and host are generally so unwilling to part, that the request is usually granted. The horses are again unharnessed, and the coach taken back to the coach-house. After a few days the visitor again packs up, and prepares to go; but the gentleman and lady of the house renew their entreaties, and the compassionate and soft-hearted guest often orders his horses back to their stables for the third or fourth time, and sits down again at the crowded table of his "agreeable host." We have a Sunday every seven days, the members of a family meet together every month, now and then a dinner party, tea party, or ball is given, on which occasions the house is turned topsy-turvy, and every nerve is strained for effect. On the other side of the 56th parallel of latitude, it is very different. There, every day is a Sunday or holiday; there, there are no working days. The doors are never shut, one guest follows another, and festival succeeds to festival. They are always prepared, always ready, always cheerful, and live in an unruffled ocean of brotherly sociability.

As working days are banished from their calendar, so are state rooms from their architecture. Saloons usually closed, whose furniture is always kept covered except on grand company occasions, are unknown. All rooms are reception rooms, and the never-ceasing swarms of welcome guests fill every corner. The hall of the house is generally expressly appropriated to strangers. On some estates there are express houses built for guests. The intimate connexions of a family have often apartments kept always in reserve for them alone at the houses of their relations.

It is impossible that the landlord of an inn can more eagerly look out for guests than a Livonian or Courland nobleman. "Guests! Guests!"

is the cry from one end of the house to the other, if a coach is descried from afar. All run to the windows to see who the strangers are, and whether they are coming this way. The servants all stand at the door; the host, hostess, and children all fly out to meet the beloved strangers, for see, the coach is coming this way! It is the good uncle, the dear aunt, the pretty cousin; the rest of the family are coming by-and-by, and will bring two or three strangers with them. What delight! They will remain eight days, talk, dance, breakfast, dine, sup, play at cards, ride, shoot an elk, bait a bear—ah, what will they not do!

In a country where nature is so little hospitable, it is a blessing that the people are so much so. Trembling and aching with cold, though wrapt in furs from head to foot, after riding ten miles amid storms and fog, over marshes and through forests, accompanied only by the desolate howling of wolves and bears—how the heart rejoices in the kindly homes of man! How refreshing is this generous solicitude for one's comfort! After being unfolded, washed, and dressed by the innumerable attendant spirits of the place, how cheerful and pleasant is the warm and populous dining-room! How delightful it is to kiss the fair hand of the lady of the house, and, according to northern custom, to be kissed on the forehead by her! How one enjoys the social tea-table, the snug fire-place, and the comfortable bed! In countries where there is scarcely one house to every square mile, these comforts are a thousand times more prized than in those where they may be had at every corner. And then all this is enjoyed here—gratis! It is the purest, most disinterested hospitality, that warms, clothes, feeds, and tends you! You ask civilly, they give gladly. In fact there is a little bit of paradise in this northern corner, which is nowhere else to be found in this selfish Europe.

According to northern custom, it is the duty of the host to be unceasingly occupied with the entertainment of his guests, from early in the morning till late set night, even should the visitors remain for three months; it is astonishing with what patience and cheerfulness this duty is performed. At night the master of the house pays each of his guests a parting visit in their several rooms, to see that their wishes are all attended to, and the next morning he is by their bedsides, before any of them are up, to ask after their health and their night's rest, to project hunts, drives, rides, walks, with them, and to converse according to their different tastes. There is a higher degree of self-denial and self-sacrifice necessary for all this than is often found with us. Not that I would altogether acquit the inhabitants of the north of selfishness. The Livonians and Courlanders are quite human. But hospitality is their ruling thought. She is their all-worshipped goddess, and they sacrifice to her their wishes, their convenience, their occupations, and their time.

In a country where neither politics nor literature interest the inhabitants, and where a succession of bad weather often confines the host and hostess and their guests for several days to the same rooms, it does not at first appear easy to keep up conversation. But these very circumstances have developed in the inhabitants of the north a peculiar art of conversation. The condition of the roads, the wind and weather, uncles, aunts, and relations, the merest nothings, supply matter for gossip, which shortens the time, keeps the lips elastic, and the eyes awake. For days together little anecdotes and occurrences are talked over again and again; and if nothing more can be said, so great is their sociability, that they enjoy the mere

being together, just as Göthe's Egmont enjoyed "the pleasant habit of existence."

In spite of all this, however, the entertainers are often very much at a loss. "Dear me! the house is full of guests! Good Heavens! who shall keep up the conversation? Papa has gone out—Mamma is unwell! What shall we do to entertain the guests?" The entertainment of the guests—that is always the question. The conversation—that is always the great task. Should the gentleman of the house be absent, the eldest son must do the honours, or, if he is too young, his tutor, or if he is not inclined, the clergyman is entreated to come. In place of the lady of the house, the daughters, or the governess, or the companion, must assume the office of complimenting the guests, entertaining the ladies, inquiring after their health, their journey, their relations, &c. The hospitality of the Baltic Provinces is so great, that the house is often full of strangers for days together, in the absence of both master and mistress. It is enough if representatives are there to take their place. In fact, hospitality here is scarcely a personal quality, but belongs as a fixture to the estate, and can be practised, even when the whole family of the proprietor are travelling abroad. Guests arrive as usual, and find some steward, physician, or pastor, who plays the agreeable host in the absence of his lord, and takes care that his reputation for hospitality shall not suffer in his absence.

As every carriage, whether it come with one, two, or four horses, is welcome, and as hospitality is equally exercised to all, it may be supposed that many take advantage of these customs, to lessen the cost of house-keeping. In the neighbourhood of every great family, there are always to be found some gifted *Ranudos*, some less wealthy *Colibrados*, who look upon the rich mansion as an unfailing resource, and who are almost always to be found quartered upon their liberal neighbours. Sometimes they just drop in for a moment, to inquire after their friends' health, and to ask their advice; they are determined to run away directly; but gradually they reluctantly allow themselves to be persuaded to stop the night, just to give their horses a little rest; and then invariably forget themselves so far, as to stay for a week at least.

As often in the year as possible they set off with sons, daughters, servants, attendants, with their whole household in short, to spend their Christmas or Easter with their rich neighbours. On these occasions, as many poor, lame, meagre horses as possible are harnessed to the crazy old coaches, for it would not be becoming to visit their grand connexions with less than six horses to each coach at least. Besides, by that means the steeds will be fed for nothing during the visit; poor things! they are very thin—they may as well fatten up a little at their wealthy friend's. These feasts, indeed, occur but three times a year in the calendar. The stupid Italian priests had no notion of northern hospitality! "Mamma, we must go a few days before. They will be so angry if we be too late." "Adieu, my dear factotum, take good care of every thing. We shall be back in eight days." After five or six weeks they return, tired and satisfied, with fattened horses, and enchanted with the amiability of the wealthy neighbours. "*Ach Gott!* Our dear friends wouldn't let us go at all! They are such charming people, and so fond of us!"

There is, indeed, a small class, consisting chiefly of petty landowners, younger sons, old bachelors, and the like, who live entirely on hospitality.



They hire a room somewhere, and their only capital consists of a small carriage, and three bad horses. With these they earn their bread. Wherever they hear of an approaching festival, or hunt, they immediately attend it, invited or uninvited: They are at home all over the country, and call all the world their uncles and aunts; every body is either their dear old friend, or their distant relation. Their little vehicle, with their "man of all work" on the box, who, like Harpagon's Maître Jacques, is at the same time valet, coachman, cook, housekeeper, and footman—drives about the whole country, and is everywhere the ready filler-up of the company. These guests of all work live generally with a dozen different families, in which they have grown so familiar as to be considered a part of the household. They drive to the house, they and their horses are taken in, fed, warmed, tended, and served; they stay a few weeks, and then go somewhere else. Everywhere they are welcomed, and may do as they please.

Even in Courland and Livonia, however, complaints are beginning to be made that hospitality is not now what it once was, in a golden age, in the *tempi passate*, of which they have begun to talk. People, we hear, are grown more selfish and cold, luxury has increased, and those who were formerly contented with a glass of beer or punch, and a primitive table, are not now so easily satisfied. Hospitality, therefore, it is said, cannot now be practised on so large a scale as formerly. These, however, are only the discontented grumbings of the old, and have no influence on a stranger who has no personal knowledge of what these provinces may have been in that same much talked of golden age. Their hospitality, as I have said, is grounded on the national elements of the north, and is deeply engrafted in the character of the people. It is still active and beautiful, with a root strong enough to secure its firmness and duration.

#### SEA-BATHING.

The season at which the society of Courland displays itself to most advantage is in the month of July, when all the world flies to the seashore, and builds bathing-huts on the strand. All the seaport towns are then filled with guests from the interior, who come to draw fresh strength and vigour from the cold sea water. The most lively bathing places are Libau and Reval. The water of Riga is not salt enough. Libau, which lies nearest to Lithuania, attracts many Polish guests, and Reval is much visited by the citizens of St. Petersburg, and sometimes even by the court. All the other little towns on the coast, Habsal, Pernau, Windau, Arensburg, attract numbers of visitors. All the private mansions near the sea are full. The interior is left quite empty, while on the coast every little wooden hut or cabin of the Lettish and Esthonian peasants, is occupied by distinguished and wealthy families.

As soon as the great Easter feast is over, the question of whether, when, and how "we shall go to the sea-coast" is discussed. The first question, "whether," is generally answered in the affirmative. The second is answered by the prevalent opinion that before the 1st of July the sea is not warm enough for use, and the third answer depends upon whether the healing powers of the sea, or the life and frolic of the bathing-places,

be the objects in view. If the former, a hut is either built or hired on the coast; if the latter, some town is decided upon.

The length of the coast from Narva to Libau is 150 German miles. This whole line is now filled with merry, social circles. Bands of music from Germany, and ballad-singers from Riga, travel along the shore to enliven the merry-makings of the bathers; and the above-mentioned class, who, in winter, travel incessantly from mansion to mansion, now drive about among the bathing-huts to visit their good friends and relatives.

Sea-bathing wonderfully strengthens the health and spirits, and especially the appetite. The dwellings and accommodation of the bathers are very confined, and many ludicrous difficulties arise, the wealthy and luxurious gentry having to put up with all sorts of expedients. A merry, careless, frolicsome disposition prevails everywhere. Twice a day the bathers march to the battle-field against the foaming waves, and twice a day they celebrate their victory with dripping locks at the social board. The close, crowded manner of living, and the scanty accommodation, excite confidence and familiarity among them, and the excellent health of all makes them full of fun and frolic. Sociable games, dances, music, masquerades, *tableaux vivants*, private theatricals, &c., follow one another in close succession, and the days of the bathing season roll away like the waves of the sea that tumble and dash over one another in wild sport and revelry.

As all sorts of benefits for the coming year are expected from sea-bathing, and every one determines to lay in a stock of health, from which he may supply himself at will during the winter, they are very conscientious in the exact number of baths, and would as little think of neglecting a single dip, while on the coast, as of neglecting to go to church on a great festival day. The exact number of baths necessary for returning with a proper stock of health, has been fixed at fifty. This is called the Smaller Cure. The Larger Cure is from sixty to seventy baths, and much envied is he who takes as many. Every one keeps his bath account in his bathing-hut, by drawing a line with chalk upon the wall each time that he emerges from the briny flood, red as a crab, dripping with seawater, and trembling all over with cold.

The inhabitants of the Baltic provinces have such confidence in sea-bathing that their physicians recommend it for almost every kind of illness. On that account, although the actual bathing season ceases with the 1st of August, many continue it during August, in which month it is already so cold that the bathers go down to the shore wrapt in thick wadded cloaks, and the bathing-rooms are well-heated. Nevertheless, bathing is even then considered healthy, and it has been settled that all ailments contracted by cold-bathing must be cured by more cold bathing; so that no coughs, colds, rheumatisms, or toothache are allowed to interrupt it, but are all to be washed away again in the salt flood.

No amusements are so popular in the bathing season as riding, driving, and walking. Immediately after breakfast in the morning, and immediately after tea at night, every one wanders out, either on foot, on horseback, or in a carriage. The Baltic sea-coast offers but little, indeed, that can be called beautiful or attractive. It is everywhere so sandy and bare, so gloomy and treeless, as to be a real desert. But in these sociable countries, beauty is less admired in trees and smiling landscapes than in cheerful social circles; and, besides, the coast must always possess the

glorious and untiring spectacle of the boundless expanse of waters and the glittering fall of billows and waves on the sands. The grey waves of the Baltic cast on the beach a very beautiful and prized production—amber. The beach is consequently a favourite promenade, and amber-seeking one of the established social amusements. This amber is found in the greatest perfection on the Prussian coast, and is most abundant near Königsberg and Pillau; but the Baltic Sea casts it up also along the whole Courland coast. It is even sometimes found on the southern strand of Oesel, though seldom, and sometimes at Riga; but, with these exceptions, never north of Pernau. As the Jews are everywhere attracted by any thing glittering and costly, and in other countries trade mostly in gold, silver, and jewellery, so here they are the principal dealers in the golden-hued amber. They not only sell it, but work and mould it into various ornamental forms; and on the boundaries, between Russia and Prussia, the Jews always offer travellers a number of pretty fancy articles cut in amber, at very low prices. This delicate production is very popular among the social circles of the north; the wealthy and idle gentry amuse themselves by cutting and working the golden fragments very tastefully. Every one lays in a store of amber on the coast, and during the rest of the year they metamorphose the raw masses into different elegant and glittering little presents.

After a storm, which has stirred up the bottom of the sea, any one walking on the sands will find the whole beach covered with dark green sea-weed, which the storm has sowed with sunny gleaming amber stones. The smooth and shining pieces sparkle like crystals of gold on the dull dark underground of sea-weed; and no newly-discovered diamonds in Brazilian mines can excite more joy in the finders than these gleaming fragments in the merry bathers of Courland. The great harvest of amber falls, indeed, after this festive period—namely, in the autumn. It is oftenest found by the poor fishermen and peasants, of whom it is purchased at low prices by cunning Jews, who sell it again at a considerable profit. In these provinces, however, the amber-fishery is as free as the chase, and every one has what he finds. In Prussia, the laws of the amber-fishery spoil this pleasant diversion for the bathers, just as the game-laws often deprive an amateur sportsman of the pleasure of shooting a hare.

Sea-bathing being so dear a diversion to every Courlander, the parting with the merry Baltic coast is a very melancholy parting, and the wish soon to return is, for the most part, generally and sincerely expressed. These wishes, and the natural feeling of thankfulness towards the health-giving sea, has led to the establishment of a custom intended to show the gratitude of the bathers by a symbolical ceremony. After the last bath, accordingly, all the bathers proceed to the sands, and throw into the waves either a few coins, or a ring, or a pearl, pronouncing at the same time the wish to spend next year four more happy weeks on the coast. The sea has always kept its word, and for many thousand years has always been at the appointed rendezvous at the proper time, but changeable mankind do not always keep their promises. By the next summer some have travelled into distant countries, forsaking their good Baltic, and many, though they have remained faithful to their country, have found repose within some narrow grave.

As I have already said, the sociality of the Baltic provinces is so great,



that in a wealthy family every day is a Sunday, a feast day, or a holiday; yet, on extraordinary occasions, the merriment and festivity rise even higher than usual; so after one of these extraordinary occasions, a short languor generally prevails. Such a period of languor and repose is that which immediately follows the bathing-season. The Courlanders have then to mourn the vanished revels, and to settle themselves again in the interior; but the good Courlanders are too sociable to like mourning without company; they soon begin to close in friendly communion again, and little circles are formed everywhere, who sigh together over the recollection of the sea, and soon mutually resolve to chase melancholy by dancing, feasting, and jesting. The season for the chase, so anxiously looked for by the Courland gentlemen, soon follows, to which I shall devote the next chapter.

## THE CHASE.

"*Oui, la philosophie c'est quelque chose, mais la danse c'est plus,*" said once a lady to a philosopher. Had a Livonian or Courlander been speaking in her place, he would have said the same, only substituting "*la chasse*" for "*la danse*." It has been settled in these provinces that the head of all philosophy, the most important study of the present day, now that there are no more heathens and barbarians to attack, is the chase, whether directed against wolf, fox, bear, badger, elk, lynx, deer, hare, otter, snipe, heron, swan, or heathcock.

With us there no longer exists any proper kind of hunting. Cultivation has invaded and limited the domains of wild beasts; and the chase is fettered by various restraints. This man may shoot, that man may not. Here one may hunt, there not. In this manner the whole noble art is rendered matter of mechanical routine, and dull science banishes all poetry from the chase.

Civilization has exterminated many wild races. Of wolves and bears there is no trace left. Stags are very rare; lynxes exist only in the proverb about lynx-eyes. The wild beasts that we have, are preserved and confined on the few wild spots which the agriculturist has left the hunter, and are more slaughtered than hunted. And against what tame terrors do our hunters draw forth with bold and spirited songs? Hare's feet that scratch no one, deer's teeth that bite only the grass, and the howls of foxes that frighten no one.

How different is it on the Dvina and Narova, on the Peipus Lake and the Finland Gulf! In 3000 German square miles of forest and marsh, there are two dozen small towns, and scarcely any thing to be called a village. The settlements of men occupy but a small part of the vast wilderness. Here are forests scarcely ever trod by any foot but a wolf's or bear's, rivers and lakes seldom disturbed by a boat. Here hunting has indeed its reward. In such a country a man need not be ashamed of being a sportsman.

The races of beasts are various enough, and endowed by nature with sufficient means of defence to make their conquest difficult, interesting, and adventurous. The northern tiger (the lynx) in the trees, the Livonian hyena (the wolf) on the pathways, the bear in his den, the badger in his hole, the seals and otters on the river banks—all know how to trick and cheat mankind, making many heroes, and some martyrs.

The chase is not here restrained and fettered by rules and regulations. It has not been made a science. No one is a hunter by profession, but every one is a born sportsman, and hunts and shoots for pleasure. Nothing is forbidden game; and every man, that is, every nobleman, may shoot bears and elks as freely as sparrows.

In Livonia every landowner is the sole proprietor of all the game on his domains. In this manner many noblemen count whole herds of deer, elks, foxes, and lynxes, among their cattle. Many have whole colonies of bears, and extensive settlements of wolves, on their land. In Courland the freedom of game is extended still further; for every nobleman has the right of hunting on the ground belonging to others, without asking leave. Even in Livonia it is never customary for one noble to exclude another from his hunting grounds, so that every one of these landowners may look upon himself as privileged to sport over the whole country between Lithuania and Finland. It may easily be imagined, therefore, that hunting parties in Courland are made on a very large scale.

Many gentlemen have different estates in opposite parts of the country. They sometimes sound the horn on the one estate, dive into the forests with their hounds, horses, and hunters, and emerge again after three or four days, to rest in their other castle, after having reaped the game-harvest of twenty or thirty miles of forest. Many quarter themselves in some lonely house in the wilderness for weeks together, and make excursions into the surrounding district. Sometimes the poorer nobility speculate with their hunting privileges, which are shared by all the companions of a nobleman; they hire assistants, and, scouring through the forests, shoot stores of game, which they sell again at good prices.

The two kinds of sporting most practised here, are the "flying hunt," and the "clapper hunt." The "flying hunt" is followed entirely on horseback, and with hounds. The hunters follow the noise of their canine guides, who find out the track of the game, and all that the dogs raise is shot.

The "clapper hunt" requires the assistance of drivers, and is confined to wolves, bears, elks, and such animals. It has its name from the clapping instruments of the drivers, with which they strike against the trees to rouse the game. The Lettes and Esthonians, the skilful assistants of the noble hunters, raise a tumult with whistling, screaming, shouting, and clapping, which might drive a Diogenes from his tub, let alone the poor shy beasts of the forest. Their general hunting-cry may be articulated "*Skrowya! Skrowya.*" But it will not be easy for the imagination to picture the many dreadful variations of this *Skrowya* that resound in the forests of the Baltic. The tribes who inhabit the wilderness, almost in as savage a state as the wolves and elks themselves, are particularly adapted to be the assistants of sportsmen. They have great skill in imitating all natural sounds to snare the game, and in discovering its numbers and haunts; so that a Lettish or Esthonian gamekeeper can give the most accurate information, not only as to the rank and locality of the elks and deer, the size of their families, and their last battles and feuds with the wolves, but also respecting the number of nests of the partridges and heathcocks, the extension of their colony, and the alterations in their haunts. His imitative voice well knows how to snare every animal that has an ear and a throat. They even howl horrible harmony to the prowling wolves the night before a hunt, in order to allure them into the

fixed enclosure, where they are surrounded by the hunters. The growling of the bear, however, appears to be incapable of imitation.

The rich landowners sometimes invite all their neighbours for twenty miles round to a great hunt. The field is then taken for eight successive days against the shy inhabitants of the forest, in sledges, droshkies, and coaches, or on horseback, accompanied by multitudes of peasants and dogs. The meals are taken under the shade of a lofty fir-tree, from which a lynx has just been expelled, or in the den of a bear who has just been overcome, or in the lair of a newly-shot elk. Sometimes a corps of musicians accompanies the party, and cards and dice are seldom wanting. It might be imagined that Tacitus had made his remarks on the ancient tribes of Germany, in these haunts of their unsophisticated descendants; except that instead of savages clothed in bearskins, these hunters are always well dressed, sometimes young and handsome, and generally well educated and intelligent. The assuming of the toga virilis was the great era in the life of a Roman youth. The fowlingpiece is here an emblem of the same significance. Even little boys, as soon as they can stand alone, are initiated into the merry life of the hunter, and father, son, and grandson often hunt together. The first elk shot by a nobleman's son is talked of half his life, and the last bear conquered by an old man, before his death, is long thought of with mournful pride by his friends. In some noble families the passion for hunting has taken such deep root, that every member of it is a modern Nimrod; while in others, few in numbers, a dislike to sporting is an hereditary characteristic. There are many noblemen to be found who were never out of their forests and wildernesses, who in the seventy years of their existence have used up more than a hundred calfskins for hunting-boots, and who have expended more saltpetre on game than their forefathers required to conquer the country.

#### FROM ZIERAU TO DONDANGEN.

The next town which I reached in this land of hospitality, sea-bathing, and Nimrods, was Hasenpoth; a singular name, but no contemptible place. The Lettes call the town *Aishputte*, but it is not yet decided by antiquarians whether this is a Lettish translation for Hasenpoth, or Hasenpoth a Germanization of Aishputte.

Hasenpoth is a place which in the history of the world has certainly played no very conspicuous part. The town has scarcely 2000 inhabitants, and they are mostly Jews. The streets are not paved; and not long ago the gentlemen and noblemen, leaving their balls and parties at night, were carried home huckaback, by a certain class of Jews, denominated the *fiacres* of Hasenpoth. In spite of all this, however, I would not have thee, dear reader, think too contemptuously of Hasenpoth. Picturesquely grouped in the valley of the Tepper, it is by no means an ugly object, and possesses one fine old ruin. These little towns of Livonia and Courland are very peculiar. They possess no industrious and intelligent bourgeoisie, like our small German towns; but they are in winter the rendezvous of the surrounding nobility, who form more elegant and cultivated circles than are ever found in German places of the same rank.

Hasenpoth has its clubs, casinos, soirées, and masked balls, as well as Mitau and Riga. These balls usually last three times twenty-four hours,



as the company assemble from great distances, and must have a sufficient reason for harnessing so many horses; and bad as are the ball-rooms, yet the dancers might be transplanted to Berlin or Vienna without losing in effect, or being in the slightest degree embarrassed. Nay, in many cases, their grace and dexterity would excite just admiration. Ninety-nine out of a hundred of my readers probably pronounce for the first time the name of Hasenpoth, yet in the Baltic provinces its balls and assemblies are a universal theme of conversation. So different are the scales of comparison in the various countries of Europe. Of course it is only the neighbouring nobility who give this place the slightest importance. Hasenpoth in itself, as a town, is insignificant enough, and its citizens have not the least social, political, or commercial consequence. Of the thirteen votes which decide the election of a pastor for this town, twelve belong to the nobles of the surrounding country, and only one to the citizens of Hasenpoth themselves.

## GOLDINGEN.

Hasenpoth is important in Courland, but Goldingen is much more so, and comes next to Mitau in rank. It lies on the Windau, the greatest river of Courland, which, rising in Lithuania, connects it with distant regions. It has narrow streets, high houses, and a paved market-place, and looks altogether more like a town than the so-called towns of Courland generally do, which, in fact, are more like villages.

A reef of rocks runs right across the Windau at Goldingen, and this no doubt led to the selection of the place by the first settlers there. The reef is very useful in catching fish, and the hills on the banks of the river presented facilities for defence. The ruins of former castles are still to be found on the hills, and the fishery on the reef still continues; and a very peculiar kind of fishing it is.

The reef is two or three feet high, is quite flat, level, and uninterrupted, and runs right across the river, so that the water flows down it calmly and equably. This waterfall is called "The Runmel." The fish which swim up the river, when they come to this point, make a run and a jump, and leap up upon the platform. This cleverness on the part of the fish causes their destruction by the hands of man, who knows how to turn the sagacity as well as the stupidity of animals to his own advantage. The fishermen fasten baskets and nets to the reef, over which the water foams away; the fish make their leaps, and jump right into the nets.

The fishermen of Courland have another way of catching fish; they harpoon them at night by torchlight, in the same manner as some of the savages in North America do. With us, I believe, this manner of fishing is scarcely ever practised, though very common in the Baltic provinces. They stick up a pole at one end of the boat, at whose top is hung a small iron basket full of fire. The light glares upon the water, attracting and fascinating the fish. One of the fishermen stands, armed with the harpoon, at one end of the boat; another rows silently and slowly up the river. The fish, who are more clearly seen through the water by the glare of the light than in broad sunshine, remain motionless before the boat for a few seconds gazing at the fire, and then usually receive their deathstroke from the experienced harpooner. In summer the rivers of the country glitter at night with the numberless lights of these fish-murdering wanderers.

We examined the great works in the neighbourhood of Goldingen, which were begun a few years ago for the intended canal of the Windau. Great complaints are made that an undertaking which cost the inhabitants many millions should never have been completed, and that the officers engaged should have pocketed hundreds of thousands for nothing.

How much like a city Goldingen now feels, is shown by the perpetual disagreements of its citizens with the nobility of the surrounding country. Shortly before my arrival these two classes had severed themselves completely, and each had its own club and casino. This indicates a more independent spirit in the citizens of Goldingen than is to be found in any other of the small towns of Courland, where they are generally the humble and submissive vassals of the nobility.

I made some little excursions from Goldingen to the castles of the surrounding country. Edwahlen is a very celebrated old mansion, which formerly belonged to the bishops of Pilten, and at present is in possession of one of the most eminent nobles of Courland, called von Behr. It is one of the few castles of Courland which have retained their antique architecture to the present day. It forms a turreted quadrangle, surrounded on three sides by water. On the fourth side it is sheltered by a grove of very old oaks, which forms part of the park. Beyond the moat are the mills, manufactories, breweries, church, &c. The church is a stately and solid building, like most churches in these provinces.

Many antiquities, offensive and defensive, armour, &c., hung upon the walls of the church; among others, a very long trumpet, to which was attached a singular anecdote. This instrument once belonged to a ducal trumpeter, who, after partaking of the sacrament, and reverentially receiving the priestly benediction, quietly plucked his pistols from his girdle, and shot himself in the midst of the church, before the eyes of the whole congregation.

When I visited Edwahlen, the family of the proprietor were absent on their travels. "They rob you of many a pound of butter and flour by travelling, do they not?" said I to an old peasant with whom I had entered into conversation; "and no doubt you have more to pay and to suffer when your master is travelling far away from you." "Why, sir," said the old man, "I don't think it does any harm for our masters to visit foreign countries. They see the freedom of other peasants, and if they have been severe they come back milder, and try to ameliorate our condition. Those gentlemen who always remain at home learn nothing but hunting and playing cards, and that wastes more money than travelling. But we don't like them to remain too long, for we like better to be ruled by our own lords and fathers than by their substitutes." I was surprised to find these sensible and independent feelings in a serf concerning the conduct of his master. I have often since had opportunities of observing the sound philosophy of the Lettes, whom we very falsely imagine sunk in the lowest depths of slavish apathy, and of admiring the general clearness of their views, particularly with regard to their relation to their lords.

I visited the pastor of Edwahlen, an amiable and sensible man, who received me with all the open hospitality of the country, and who has since become one of my truest friends. The pastors here are mostly foreigners, or the children of foreigners, who are "imported" or "bespoken" by the nobles as tutors and teachers, and who, after learning the language of the country, usually exchange the pedagogue's chair, which is seldom quite

free from thorns, for the pulpit, which is always well lined and cushioned. In fact, it would be difficult to find a German country where the clergymen lead so pleasant a life. Their appointment indeed depends entirely on their patrons! but when once appointed they are tolerably independent, can only be displaced by a consistorium, and have small endowments quite independent of the nobility. These endowments are generally sufficient to support the pastor and maintain his household very comfortably. They are little separate estates, with their own serfs, and their own independent jurisdiction. These parsonage lands lie at a little distance from the nobleman's estate to which they belong, and every great domain has its little dependency of parsonage lands attached to it.

The parsonages are regarded as little communities in themselves, the pastors dating their letters and documents, "*Pastoral Edwahlen*"—*Pastoral Hasenpoth*—*Pastoral Grobin*, &c. The principal income of a minister is derived from his lands. They have seldom fixed stipends, and the only actual money they receive, are the copeks and small coins brought them at christenings, sacraments, &c. They sometimes, to eke out their means, go on what are called praying journeys to the huts of the peasants, who make them small presents of flax, eggs, cloth, butter, fowls, &c.; the peasants also bring some present with them whenever they visit their pastor. These prayer journeys, which are certainly rather unworthy of the dignity of a Christian apostle, are becoming less and less usual.

The political situation of the clergymen, and their relation to the nobility, remains to be considered. They form a peculiar caste and hierarchy among themselves, and as such are in opposition to the nobility. As preachers of the gospel, as cultivated and Christian men, they ought to be the salt of the land, and should everywhere act as mediators between the poor and their masters; in many respects they fulfil these duties, and effect much by mild opposition to the nobles. This collision of classes, however, does not prevent the friendship of individuals. The pastors of the different districts may generally be found constant visitors and trusted friends at the castles of the nobility. The pastors are the authors, the antiquaries, the book-collectors, the historians, and the linguists of the country; and almost every one has some branch, or at least some twig, of learning, which he cultivates with great diligence. In general, however, they are not so learned as the clergymen of Germany. Every Sunday, without exception, a sermon is preached in the Lettish language, and every month, as well as on festival days, an additional one in German. Every time also that a very large part of the congregation is German, a German sermon is preached. On great festival days the preachers have not a little to do, as their districts are generally very large and populous, and the distribution of the sacrament alone, to a congregation of 700 or 1000 persons, is no easy work.

The pastors drive about on sledges in the winter to visit one another, and form often very agreeable little parties. At these visits, so much attention, friendship, and hospitality is displayed, particularly in the form of cakes, coffee, good dinners, &c., that the guests readily prolong their stay for a few days. We foreigners are seldom so patient, and are not fond of staying so long at one house, for which the Pastor of Edwahlen reproached me kindly when I took leave of him the next day.

I had still another castle in the neighbourhood to visit, which excited my curiosity on account of the stories connected with it: this was All-



schwangen. This estate formerly belonged to a Count von Schwerin, who, while travelling abroad, apostatized from the Lutheran faith, and became a Catholic. On returning to his estates, he ordered all his serfs to apostatize with him, and where they did not allow themselves to be converted by fair means, he enforced Catholicism with flogging and the torture. His wife, who had mediated with the tyrant for some poor peasants, he one day threw out of a window of his castle into the moat beneath, where she died. The property of this barbarian was afterwards forfeited, and became crown-land; the inhabitants, however, are still Catholics. Their religion has altered their character, and they enjoy but a bad reputation in the surrounding district. The body of Count Schwerin lies still entire and uncorrupted in the church vaults. The Protestants of the neighbourhood say that he does not decay because he is never to reach heaven; while the Catholic peasants of Allschwangen, who have long ago forgotten what good Protestants they once were, ascribe the circumstance to his canonization.

#### PILTEN AND WINDAU.

Three miles above the mouth of the Windau stands the little town of Pilten, which was once the capital of a bishopric that in many respects was entirely independent of the dukedom. At the mouth itself is the town of Windau, the most northerly in Courland. It is the second harbour in the province, and forms a sort of miniature copy of Libau. It would, indeed, be almost too insignificant to deserve mention here, were it not for the prospect it has of one day rising into importance. The Windau river, at whose mouth it lies, rises in Lithuania, and flows through Courland from south to north. Its source is close to the Niemen, which is navigable very high up. It is, therefore, intended to connect the two rivers by a canal so as to make the Windau serve as a mouth to the Niemen, whose own mouth lies out of the Russian territory, and by this means to draw to the town of Windau the whole wood trade of Lithuania, which at present employs many hundreds of warehouses and mills at Tilsit and Memel. This project is at present, however, at a stand still, for some unexplained reasons.

I did not myself visit Windau, but proceeded straight northward from Goldingen.

#### THE MOST NORTHERLY ESTATES.

For six miles nothing peculiar presented itself, excepting the boards which served as milestones, and pointed out the boundaries of the different estates. "Paddegen estate" on one side of the ditch, and on the other "Granduppen estate," then "Oseln estate," and "Rönnen estate." All the land belongs to the great nobles, and nowhere do the free possessions of small proprietors, or the territories of independent cities, intersect these large domains. In England and Germany the variety of subdivisions give the country the appearance of a fine diminutive Mosaic. Here all is coarse, massive, in huge blocks. One great territory follows another, until at length, on the northernmost point of the peninsula, the estate of Dondangen, like a gigantic key-stone, crowns the edifice.

The extreme end of a country, the point of a peninsula, round which foams the mighty sea, has always a particular charm of its own; on the one side lies the whole mass of country and of population, on the other, the boundless expanse, the desert waste of waters. Such points generally afford many peculiar phenomena for observation. They are usually very barren, and exposed to storms, like the pinnacle of a tower, or the corner of a house; they are lonely, isolated, little visited by travellers, and excluded from the busy every-day world. Perhaps it was ideas like these that made me particularly anxious to visit the northernmost point of the Courland peninsula.

It is the noble and wide-spread family of Sacken to whom this portion of the earth's surface has fallen as a share. Courland here protrudes into the sea in the shape of a nose, on account of which the farthest point is named "*Domes-näs*."\* A man possessed of such a nose may well be reckoned rich. It measures five Livonian miles of sea-coast, on each side, from the point to the base, and contains upwards of thirty square miles, which, with all its forests, rivers, plants, animals, men, women, and children, are the exclusive property of one man; and are here valued at—what does the reader guess?—Neither more nor less than 400,000 dollars (60,000*l.*), for which this little kingdom might be purchased, were it not entailed. In former times, the value of land was even less. King Waldemar of Denmark, in the year 1347, sold to Brother Heinrich Tusemer, grand-master of the order of the brothers of the German house, the whole duchy of Esthonia (350 square miles), with all the castles, towns, villages, farms, precincts, fiefs, spiritual and temporal, with the services of the inhabitants, of castles and towns, of horsemen, and of peasants with their carts, with all the pastures, meadows, lawns, forests, trees, marshes, groves, fields, and deserts, with all the iron, gold, silver, and other metals, all salt found in present or future times, all running water, mills, and tolls, with the produce of the chase and the fisheries; to have, to possess, to keep, to use, to enjoy, to rule, with all rights, possessions, powers, and titles thereunto belonging, with the full use and exercise of all such rights belonging to the said duchy—for—19,000 silver marks! A price for which many a private house in St. Petersburg could not be purchased.

The castle of Dondangen, the most northerly in Courland, is built in the middle of its peninsula. It is one of the most important in the country, spacious and solid, and furnished with many buildings for guests; it has even a regular theatre, and the refined and intelligent circles which meet there, to represent and witness the performance of classical dramas, form a striking contrast to the ideas entertained by many, of the barbarism of these northern nobles.

The coast of Dondangen is desolate, sandy, and flat; tedious and dreary to the traveller, but dangerous and dreadful to the seaman. This nose, so fertile in comforts and enjoyments to its possessor, is a threatening and ominous monster to the ships which sail near it. At this point there stretches far into the sea a treacherous sand-bank, upon which many ships are lost every year. The danger is increased by a whirling movement of the waters on the eastern side of the peninsula, occasioned by a collision of the currents of the Baltic and the Gulf of Riga. It is said that any ship drawn into this whirlpool is inevitably lost.

\* *Näs* is the Plattdeutsch for nose.

It is a Russian law that a third of the produce of wrecked vessels belongs to the finders, and another third to the proprietor of the estate. If it is inconceivable how such monstrous laws as these barbarous old strand-rights are, should ever have been passed, it is still more inconceivable how they still remain in force among civilized nations. But it is so. The revenue yearly derived from the wrecks on these ten miles of coast is very considerable. In former times it is said that the preachers even included in their public prayers at church, a supplication for "a fertile strand," meaning a fertility of wrecks.

To what crimes this frightful state of things has led is shown by the history of that Livonian nobleman, who some years ago changed the position of the beacons, in order to mislead the ships and throw them on his sands, after which he murdered the mariners and possessed himself of the cargoes, pretending that the crews had gone to the bottom. This is a well-known fact, as also that he was banished to Siberia on the discovery of his crimes; but it is less generally known that he became a very useful member of society there, industriously cultivated, built and colonized a large district, till he died, the founder, benefactor, and ruler of a large village, with upwards of 1000 inhabitants.

## MITAU.

Mitau is the capital of Courland, and lies on its most important navigable river, the Aa, in a sandy yet fruitful district. Eight or nine small streams flow from different sources into the Aa at this point. The surrounding country is free from forests and marshes, and towards the south is particularly adapted for the growth of wheat. The situation of Mitau is another circumstance favorable to its prosperity. The province has somewhat the form of a snake, with a very large head, and small tapering tail; Mitau is situated nearly in the centre of this figure, alike distant from tail and head, in the heart of the country, in its most fertile district, on its most navigable river; and it is not to be wondered at, that first the grand masters of the knights, and afterwards the dukes and nobles, should have selected it for the capital, the residence of the court, and the rendezvous of society and refinement, and that under the Russian dominion, it should have remained the seat of government, and the residence of the highest authorities of Courland. Mitau is consequently the most important and best known town in the province. Any one who hears Mitau mentioned by a petty proprietor of the interior, who, living in his wooden castle, takes little part in the doings of the fashionable world, would imagine Versailles or Paris was spoken of. Its social circles are the highest objects of ambition to the young gentlemen and ladies of Courland, and the Lettes speak of Yelgava, as they call it, as if it was the capital of the world.

Mitau is only five miles from Riga, yet essentially different in almost every respect. Riga has high Gothic houses and narrow crooked old streets, the whole compact, and built of stone; Mitau has broad regular streets, and low, one-storied, wooden houses. Riga was built by genuine citizens, whose birth and death, whose whole life, ambition, and sphere of action, were confined within the walls of the city; Mitau, by dukes and nobles, who inhabited it only during a few months of the winter season. Riga keeps itself clear of Jews; Mitau swarms with them. Riga is a real commercial city, depending upon civic activity, and a moneyed aristocracy;



Mitau is a capital of nobles, with an aristocracy of birth and polished manners. Even the Livonian families of distinction, therefore, often spend the winter at Mitau, to escape the bourgeoisie of Riga; and the two towns, though such near neighbours, carry on little intercourse with each other.

The population of Mitau amounts to 15,000, but it is difficult to say what part of this population can be described as permanent residents, the noble families inhabiting the town only in the winter, and many of them only for three or four weeks. About ten thousand inhabitants may, however, be reckoned as belonging to or dependent on the nobility, and half as many as independent citizens and officers of government. The merchants, officers, advocates, tradespeople, artists, and men of letters of Mitau, are all Germans. The lower classes, including male and female domestics, &c., are almost all Lettes; and those who raise themselves from their low station by the help of their masters are so Germanized that a stranger would hardly know them from Germans. The beggars of Mitau, the scum of the population, are Jews; other Jews, however, have rendered themselves necessary to all classes, as artists, brokers, merchants, and bankers. Mitau contains also a few Poles. Some Polish noblemen lead a retired life in Mitau, in order to escape the melancholy aspect of the degradation of their native country, or to afford their children a better education, in the neighbourhood of German schools and German society. The Russians also form a part of the population of Mitau, as of other towns in the Baltic provinces. They are active labourers, gardeners, carpenters, masons, and traders in Russian wares; they are always preferable, as workmen, to the weak and unenergetic Lettes, and often supplant the Jews as brokers and traders.

"We Mitauers," said a Mitau patriot to me once, "flatter ourselves that our city, though it contains less inhabitants than many German capitals, is yet superior to most German towns of the same size, in hospitality, refinement, and distinguished society. At all events there is no town from St. Petersburg to Berlin, which gives such refined, such lively, such social *réunions*, as Mitau." Whether this be true in its full extent or not, it is worth recording as a circumstance totally unnoticed by geographers and travellers. There are many kinds of celebrity in the world, and most of them are diffused through the medium of the press. There are some, however, which have quite escaped its Argus eye, and of such is the celebrity of Mitau, which has been overlooked by geographers, and exists not in books, but is well known to those who have participated in the enjoyment of its social circles.

The different artists, violinists, virtuosos, actors and actresses, who travel between Berlin and St. Petersburg, through Dantzic, Königsberg, Mitau, and Riga, all speak of their reception at the capital of Courland with the utmost complacency and satisfaction. They can scarcely say enough in praise of the hospitality and enthusiasm for art with which they were welcomed, of the splendid entertainments given them, and of the tender attentions of the Mitau nobility to the younger among them. The Russian officers quartered at Mitau are always full of stories of the pleasing manners of the Mitau ladies; and when the St. Petersburg guard is stationed here, as is frequently the case, they seldom leave the place before two or three new marriages have been celebrated between tall, young, Russian officers, and pretty German damsels, who have ample leisure

afterwards at St. Petersburg, or the interior, to talk over the happy days of their courtship at Mitau.

In the wintertime, the wealthy nobles of Mitau give continual fêtes, balls, and soirées, so that on a lively winter's evening the noise of carriages is incessant. At the festive period of Christmas, not merely the upper classes, but even the lowest, become partakers in the universal gaiety that prevails; even the Jews are then more sociable, and hospitable than usual. The liberality with which all leisure is sacrificed to company keeping, certainly prevents much useful exertion, and domestic life is not so domestic as with us, but on the other hand, our club and coffee-house-life, so destructive to mind, heart, and temper, is prevented.

#### ST. JOHN'S DAY AT MITAU.

The most lively epoch of the whole year at Mitau is in the midst of summer, when all the nobility around, from east, west, south, and north, meet there to transact business. On Johannistag, the 24th of June, all contracts are closed, all rents and taxes are due, all loans and interests and dividends are to be paid. Many fears and hopes, joys and sorrows, are ended in Mitau, and the rest of Courland, on this eventful day. On Johannistag, the hardpressed borrow money, the rich man buys new estates, and puts out at interest the capital he has accumulated; about Johannistag, whole miles of land are mortgaged. On Johannistag many are declared bankrupts; and while one exclaims as he drives home—"I have had a good Johanni," another mournfully sighs, "Ah this Johanni has been the ruin of me.

At Johannistag the whole town is full of life and bustle, and every spare room is occupied. The ladies make their purchases for the country; many or few, according as the Johanni of their lords and masters has been good or bad. This attracts merchants to Mitau. The relations and acquaintances, who, hidden in opposite forests of the country, have not seen one another the whole year, now exchange dinners and soirées, and a fortnight's feasting follows the three business days, to which the Johanni was originally confined.

There exists for the gentry of the town but one club, which however is very well arranged, and brings together the most delightful circles at its concerts, balls, and lotteries. The Casino of Mitau is exclusively for the nobility of the town, and for their tutors, governesses, and the other inmates of their families, who participate in all their privileges. The Courland Society of Literature and Art, the head-quarters of which are at Mitau, and the founder of which is the Staatsrath von Recke, furnishes other opportunities for meetings among the inhabitants. It is such a pleasant little academy in miniature, that even a stranger cannot but take interest in its meetings, at which the more cultivated ladies of the town are often present; and he will find pleasure in listening to the readings of the society on the Origin of the Lettes, or on the floating islands of the Courland lakes, or on the moss of the Livonian forests, or on northern bee-keeping, or on any other subject, for the society wisely avoids confining itself to any topic. Many useful undertakings have originated in this society. Among others it has led to the establishment of the Provincial Museum of Courland, in which museum are to be found all creep-

ing, swimming, flying, or walking animals, who inhabit the forests, marshes, and rivers of Courland, as well as portraits of all the Courland dukes, and other far-famed men of the country. Its plan includes every thing connected with the province itself, and excludes all else, so as to become a perfect provincial museum; a praiseworthy system, well deserving the imitation of other local museums.

The town is not poor in other collections of art and science. Many private persons possess good collections of pictures, among which, those of Count Medem and Baron Ropp are particularly worthy of note. The most important library of the country belongs to the *Gymnasium Illustre*, and contains 25,000 volumes. This gymnasium was founded by the last duke of Courland. Many learned and clever men, as Sulzer, Beutler, Schulze, have been professors there, and the lectures on law and theology are well deserving of attention. The library is particularly rich in these branches, and in history. As the gymnasium is richly endowed, and its teachers well remunerated, important men are still sometimes attached to it. The gymnasium of Mitau is in every respect one of the most important educational establishments of the Russian empire. The gymnasium itself is one of the best houses in the town, which is not rich in handsome buildings. The most distinguished edifice is the castle, the old residence of the Courland dukes. This castle, an extensive gigantic building, in the style of Versailles, lies on an island surrounded by the arms and canals of the Aa. It was built a hundred years ago by the powerful favourite, Biron, who by Russian influence became duke of Courland; it was inhabited by two dukes, was almost entirely destroyed by a fire in the year 1788, was rebuilt, and became subsequently an asylum for the fugitive king, Louis XVIII. It now serves as a residence for the chief officers of the city, and apartments are reserved for the members of the imperial family, whenever they may happen to pass through Mitau.

The poorest and most miserable inhabitants of Mitau are the Jews, four or five families of whom often live "cubbed up" together in a damp dark cellar, and lead a life which it is difficult to think worth preserving, yet to which they cling as if it were a costly jewel.

The life of the German citizens of Mitau is easy and luxurious; indeed, it is said that luxury has gained quite too much ground of late among them, and has weakened their old hospitality, good temper, and cheerfulness. Their forefathers, it is said, were far merrier over two dishes and without wine than their descendants at their luxurious banquets; and it is also said to be impossible for any host to satisfy the desires of modern guests—that, in short, if things go on thus, the whole hospitality of the country will soon be bankrupt. On this point, however, the stranger will be comforted by finding many pretty castles in different parts of Courland, where no narrow-hearted niggardliness towards guests can be complained of, and where whole suites of rooms will be allotted beforehand to the expected visitor. Respecting the first complaint, of the degenerate luxury of the good citizens of Mitau, a document in the ducal archives shows that this complaint is by no means a new one. It is dated 1591, and, after deprecating the luxurious and extravagant excesses of the Mitau citizens, decrees, among other things, that for the future, "besides cheese and butter, only three dishes shall be used at weddings;" that at the wedding of a *Rathsmann* no more than sixty guests shall be present; at that of a citizen no more than forty; of a mechanic no more than thirty; and at that of a serf no



more than twenty. Also, "that no citizen or *Rathsmann* shall eat more than three meals a day, and that no meal shall consist of more than three courses." Also, that "no *Rathsmann* shall wear satin or velvet, and no citizen silk; that the wife of a *Rathsmann* may wear a velvet bodice, but not an embroidered one," &c

## FROM MITAU TO RIGA

The environs of Mitau have few pleasing features. Though its citizens are not confined in walls and ramparts, for its suburbs gradually lose themselves in the open country, yet the inhabitants keep as strictly within the town, as if they were besieged by a hostile army. If sandy wastes, dreary deserts, and snow storms are enemies, they are indeed almost the whole year in a state of blockade. Mitau is not surrounded by pleasant villages and gardens; immediately without its gates begin the wide domains of the *Bene possessionati*, and the castles and mansions of the nobility follow one another as in the interior of the country, except that they are closer to each other than in other parts of Courland. On the right hand a morass, on the left a marsh, then flat sandy wastes or sandhills raised into waves and undulations by the wind; here and there a few firs or beech-trees;—far and wide a barren wilderness; such all around the mouth of the Dwina, reaching from Mitau to Riga, and to the sea, is the country which is daily traversed by the Mitau diligence.

Together with several other passengers, I intrusted myself to this diligence, for conveyance to Riga, in the beginning of April, 1834. The road between Mitau and Riga was still in the same unsophisticated condition as in the time of the Knights; that is to say, it was excellent in midwinter, when December and January, the most useful and active road-menders of Russia, had paved it with firm ice, but very different in April, when this pavement was completely torn up, and where, though good provision was made for the overturned passenger, the mud furnishing a soft commodious bed for his reception, he who wished to proceed quickly fared but ill.

The halfway station of St. Olai is well known to every inhabitant of Mitau and Riga, and is certainly well dedicated to the patron saint of deserts, forests, marshes, dirt, and bad weather. It stands on the border between Courland and Livonia; for though the Dwina generally forms the boundary line, Livonia here projects somewhat and claims a part of the left bank.

If we compare the country round the mouth of the Dwina, with that around the mouths of the other great rivers of the Baltic, we shall find some similarities, but many differences. The Dwina delta-land is the most barren of any. The delta lands of the Niemen, Vistula, and Oder have become fruitful, populous and luxuriant places. That this is not the case with the Dwina is probably the fault of the inhabitants, who are not so industrious in constructing canals, dikes, and other works of the kind, as the inhabitants of those districts. The delta of the Dwina, though a desert to the agriculturist, is a land of plenty to the sportsman; in spring it is crowded with innumerable waterfowl; the lakes are alive with swans and wild geese, the marshes with storks, snipes, plovers, and cranes.

From St. Olai to Riga the great marsh of Tyrul lay on our right and

the marsh of Kangerkals, which vies with it in gloom and desolation, on our left. It was evening; the lanterns of our coach were lighted, and we were thus perhaps the only enlightened people in the whole gloomy wilderness around us. People were enjoying their tea in the "*Mitau Vorstadt*" of Riga, when, after unnumbered bruises of side, back, and ribs, we at length rolled into the courtyard of our inn. The ice of the Dwina was just breaking up, and it was therefore impossible to enter Riga itself that night. I met a few burghers of the city at the inn, who had been returning to their warm hearths at Riga, from an excursion into the gloomy wilderness. I shared a room with them, and we conversed for some time on those events of times gone by, which had raised a crowded capital on the spot from which a few faint lights gleamed dimly before us, through the thick darkness that rested on the broad waters of the Dwina.

## RIGA.

In the year 1158, some merchants and seamen of Bremen were thrown out of their course by a storm, while on their way to Wisby. Having been driven round the northernmost point of Courland, and past the little island of Runoe in the midst of the gulf of Riga, and having successfully avoided the peninsula of Gretengrund, they landed at the mouth of the Dwina, which was then as unknown a land as that of the copper-coloured savages of America.

Their first treaties with the Livonians, their first undertakings on the Dwina, their settlement upon the little island of Kirchholm, the building of the castle of Hexkull, their cunning treachery towards the simple good-natured aborigines, who were all subjected to slavery, remind us forcibly of the conduct of Columbus and other discoverers. Meinhard of Bremen became the first bishop of Livonia, Berthold the second, and Albert the third. They were all brave, skilful, wise men, and are now honoured throughout Livonia, as the gardeners who sowed the seeds of the wide-branching tree of this German colony on the Baltic.

New emigrants flocked continually thither. Albert built the city of Riga in 1200, and founded the order of the "*Schwertbrüder*,"\* which soon subjugated the whole country. The first bishops appear to have ruled as sovereign princes, but their dominion over the city and the order gradually slipped from them. The citizens of Riga gave themselves a free constitution, modelled on that of Bremen, and the *Schwertbrüder* constituted themselves an independent power, first under a superior of their own, and afterwards in union with the Teutonic knightly order in Prussia, under one supreme grand-master. For some time afterwards the free citizens of Riga, the bishops and archbishops of the town, and the *Schwertbrüder* had perpetual feuds among themselves, in which the citizens usually sided with the spiritual powers, though the knights, who were the most skilful soldiers, and were in possession of the open country, generally retained the upper hand.

Riga kept up her own armies, under the command of her consuls, during the wars with the order. The citizens of Riga had, like the nobility, their own orders and armed brotherhoods, and among these was the brother-

\* In French and English books on chivalry this order is generally spoken of as the "Livonian Knights," the "*Porte Glaives*," or the "*Ensiferi*."

hood of the "Black Heads." They struck their own coins, which bore the impression of the city arms, a combination, no doubt, of the armorial bearings of Bremen and Hamburg. The shield bears two silver keys, crossed over one another, surmounted by a cross, underneath which is a gate with three towers.

We even hear mention of armed fleets belonging to Riga; and at the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries, at which time the town was in the zenith of its prosperity, descriptions occur of the domestic luxury and pomp of the Riga citizens very similar to those chronicled of other wealthy German cities.

During the half-century of Polish domination, and the century of its subjection to Sweden, Riga knew how to maintain and defend its old rights and privileges, and ranked under the Swedish kings as the second city of the kingdom. Ever since the siege and capitulation of 1710, the town has belonged to Russia.

The Dwina at Riga, like the Neva at St. Petersburg, and the Aa at Mitau, has no permanent bridges, and the ice in spring and autumn occasions consequently very inconvenient interruptions to the intercourse of the city with its suburb on the opposite bank. At St. Petersburg the bridges are ships; but at Mitau and Riga they are only floating bridges, composed of boards and beams, laid across the stream. Thick trunks of trees laid close together in the water form the basis, and are kept together by cross beams. Over these beams lie the oaken planks, which crown the bridge, but which are almost level with the water. The whole bridge can be taken to pieces by being divided into three or four parts, which are conveyed to a harbour destined for their reception.

The morning after the evening in which we had been conversing in the *Mitau Vorstadt* on the bridges and the history of Riga, the land swarmed with travellers and country people, waiting to take their wares into the city, and the water with little boats and barges, labouring through the floating fragments of ice. I seated myself in a little boat, which could hold only two or three people, for the smaller it is the more easily can it glide through the chasms in the ice. Never have I seen so much life and bustle on a river at a time when so much ice was floating down it. The Lettish and Russian sailors steered their little boats with great skill between the moving masses, now rowing through an open channel, now sticking to one piece of ice, now to another, now warding off the blow of a third, according as the thousand varied situations and difficulties of an ice passage rendered the one or the other necessary.

The aspect of the Dwina, with its broad, dark, melancholy waters, rushing to the sea in thousands of entangled whirlpools and rapids, with innumerable large and small crystallisations whirling about on the wide surface, incessantly forming themselves into new groups and shapes, was very imposing and magnificent. Then the sandbanks covered with icebergs, towering high above each other, standing thirty or forty feet out of the water, and two ells thick; and lastly, the fragile little nutshells struggling through the stormy waters, with butter and cheese for the market, in order to snatch for their owners a little profit from the threatening tumult of the Oceanides.

Riga itself was hardly noticeable in the picture. The river is too mighty for the town. Seen from the Dwina, Riga is remarkably unimposing. It is difficult to believe that a city containing 60,000 inhabitants



lies before us. No great streets, no handsome quays, stretch along the insignificant shore; all the principal streets of the town are at a distance from the water. The houses of Bremen, Lübeck, and Hamburg form picturesque and attractive groups on the banks of their respective rivers; Riga has none such, and I know no city whose existence depends so entirely on its river, which appears to be so entirely unconnected with it. Scarcely any thing is to be seen of the town but an old wall, and a few steeples peeping over it, and it is only after passing through the dark narrow gates by the water side, that we discover the busy streets and the masses of houses.

Riga is divided, like Vienna, into the old original inner kernel of the city, and the *Vorstädte*, or suburbs, lying around it; but in Riga, these two divisions form a more striking contrast to each other, being not merely opposed to one another in their different styles of architecture, but also in their population and constitution they are as different as two distinct towns.

The old city of Riga, with its towering houses, dark narrow streets, and two open spaces in which to take breath, and see a scrap of blue sky, is small, and measures scarcely half a verst in diameter. The narrow crooked streets and alleys are entangled in one another, like so many shafts and strata in a mine. The temperature of the town is that of a cavern, and there are parts of it which the sun has not seen for centuries. When the "*Sandpforte*" by the water stands open, the draught is felt in every corner of the town, and when the "*Armensünder-pforte*" closes at night, the rattling is heard from one end of the city to the other. The whole appears a huge mass of rock, bored through, with holes for houses. In this part of the town stand dwellings which have seen dozens of human generations pass away, and are now inhabited by families, whose ancestors stood by the cradle of Riga. This is the root of the old city, and here dwell the old German patrician families, from which have sprung the rulers and lawgivers of the community.

#### THE RUSSIAN SUBURBS.

Beyond a great open space, which surrounds the antique and well fortified nucleus of the town, lie the new *Vorstädte*, spacious, regular, airy, and showy. They are built quite in the Russian style, with straight streets of immense length and width, coloured white or yellow, mostly wooden houses, with green or red painted roofs of iron or wood, and plenty of pillars; altogether more pompous on the outside than comfortable within.

These *Vorstädte* are principally inhabited by day-labourers, carpenters, masons, &c.; and also by rich Russian merchants, who are connected with the interior provinces, whence they receive the wares destined to be sent beyond sea by the speculating Germans, in whose hands centres nearly the whole of the foreign trade.

These Russian merchants are principally serfs, grown rich by their extraordinary industry. There is more than one millionaire among them, who entered Riga as a young man with no other capital than his hands, eyes, ears, and a good stock of natural intelligence. It is astonishing how much a clever Russian can accomplish, even under the chains of slavery. Many of them possess ample fortunes, and live like princes; but on their

door, perhaps is engraved, "Paul the son of Peter, the serf of Shere-metieff," and they must hold themselves prepared, any day, to be summoned away from their elegant palaces, to toil as day-labourers on the estates of their lords. The rich of course make great exertions and immense sacrifices, to obtain manumission. But though we seldom hear of their lords issuing those very tyrannical commands which the law permits them, yet it is quite as unfrequent for any of these rich serfs to obtain the wished-for freedom; for their masters make it a rule to withstand the most tempting offers. They say to their serfs: "Go where you will, and earn what you can, but remain one of my people, and send me your annual Obrok."\* They pride themselves on having so many rich men for serfs, and on the power, although they seldom make use of it, of appropriating to their own ends the fortunes of their serfs. Others refuse manumission on any terms, from a mere obstinate adherence to the principle of not giving way to serfs, and from the fear of setting "a bad example."

There are, however, of course, many ways open to a serf of putting his property out of the reach of unreasonable extortion, and even sometimes of obtaining his freedom. Some-times cunning is resorted to. There is a story at Riga, of a merchant, who, unable to obtain his manumission, paid another nobleman, with whom his master was accustomed to gamble, all his losses at play, till the lord lost to his opponent the estate to which the merchant was attached, when he received his freedom from the winner, according to a previous contract.

The most interesting relations of social life in Riga, display themselves in the contract between the Vorstädte and the old town. The enslaved Vorstädte, daily increasing in population, power, and riches, knock incessantly at the gates of the privileged old German capital, demanding freedom and equality of rights. Almost all the privileges of the Russian Baltic provinces, as well those of the cities of Riga, Reval, the University of Dorpat, &c., as those of the landowners and nobility, have been for some time in danger, and have been frequently altered and limited by the Russian government. Nowhere, however, do the Russians so loudly call for equal rights with the Germans as at Riga, where they have collected in greater numbers than at any other Baltic city, and where the internal hostility and friction between the two nationalities, appear to have reached a greater degree of bitterness than any where else. Old Riga, surrounded by its Vorstädte, is like a besieged city. Within, 30,000 German Lutherans have intrenched themselves, and without, are encamped 20,000 Russians. The latter are continually and rapidly increasing, while the former, if they do not lessen in numbers, at least remain stationary. The Russians demand all the rights of citizenship, with seat and vote in the city colleges, the town-council, &c. The Germans resist these demands, declaring that the Russians know nothing about matters of this kind, and that their admission would be the ruin of the community. They point to their capitulation of 1710, according to which a Russian was never to become a citizen of Riga, nay, was not even to be allowed to open the smallest shop within the city walls. During my stay at Riga, I heard as frequent reference made to this old capitulation, as if it

\* The periodical tribute of the serfs to their lords.

had been concluded yesterday. To the Russians, this referring to an old agreement appears ridiculous enough; they do not understand the motive, and ascribe all to the obstinacy of the Germans. Many inhabitants of Riga said to me with zeal and earnestness: "Whenever a Russian sets foot in one of our colleges, we will not only leave it, but quit the town and country; for then the trade, prosperity, order, and constitution of Riga will be at an end, and the old imperial republic will be a Russian provincial town." The government, on the whole, favours the Russian pretensions, which is not unnatural; but there are many Germans connected with the government at St. Petersburg, and Riga, which has good friends and patrons among them, makes use of them to shield her from the approaching storm. Still the Russians make terrible advances. Their *Vorstädte* are continually spreading; the old city contains many hundreds of small Russian shops or booths, of which twenty years ago there was not one, and in some civic transactions they have even obtained the right of voting. What has lately, more than any thing else, given the Russians new strength and encouragement, is the nomination and installation of a Russian bishop at Riga.

As the citizens of Old Riga look with jealous eyes on the new Russian upstarts; as the old colleges and council are incessantly at war with the Russian mercantile guilds; so do the German corporations quarrel with the "*Masterovuiye*" and "*Zekhoviye Liudi*" of the Russians. The Russian mechanics, subject to no corporation laws, increase continually; there are already many masons, potters, carpenters, *Kamenshtshiki*, *Plotniki*, *Shtukkaturshchiki*, &c., at Riga. They have no idea of guilds or corporations, and are accustomed to work at will and freely throughout the whole Russian empire, travelling about where they please, as masons, carpenters, and painters. It may be imagined, how galling and disagreeable such rules as the following, imposed by the heads of the German corporations at Riga, must appear to these free mechanics:—

"A Russian mason shall be permitted to undertake repairs in the suburbs, with the exception of vaulted cellars and chimneys in such buildings as are more particularly exposed to the danger of fire, such as breweries, distilleries, &c., but he shall not be qualified to undertake any work of the kind within the city.

"A Russian potter is allowed to mend old stoves within the city, but not to set new ones. In the suburbs, however, he may set new stoves, but he is to do so subject to the superintendence of the German corporation of potters.

"It shall be permitted to Russian carpenters to build even new houses in the suburbs, provided the cost of labour in the erection does not exceed 500 rubles banco, and provided also that the foundation, the cellaring, and those parts more particularly liable to fire, shall be constructed under the superintendence of the German corporation of masons."

These and similar laws afford us an insight into the details of the feuds between the Germans and Russians, and of all the little battles and skirmishes continually going on about ovens, cellars, and staircases.

The populace of Riga consists mostly of Lettes and Russians, with which the town is continually deluged. The Russians who come to Riga, are in fact not of the best sort, being generally fugitives and runaway slaves from other places. Most of the rogues and thieves of the city are unemployed Russians. They have often rendered the environs of Riga



unsafe. In 1840, two extensive and regular bands of robbers were discovered among them. The one confined itself to the stealing of clothes, and had collected regular magazines of wearing apparel. The other gang was composed of vagrant Russian boys and girls, who in Riga are known by the technical name of *Karmantshiki*, and who gave many brilliant instances of boldness and depravity.

In the streets of the town, where the ice and snow remain unmelted as long as in a thick forest, I still found sledges in use, and much enjoyed the extraordinary beauty and refined elegance of the Russian sledges, which I now saw for the first time. Every Riga merchant has a Russian coachman and horses; carriages, sledges, and harness, are all Russian. The sledges are the lightest, prettiest, most convenient equipages in the world; a German sledge compared to them, is as a river barge to a handsome yacht. And yet the decorations of a Russian are far simpler than those of a German sledge. All our ornaments, such as swan's-necks, golden angel's heads, plumes of feathers, &c., are absent. The beauty of a Russian sledge is difficult to describe; but every curve and line in it is as graceful as those of a winged bird, and as harmoniously suited to the whole construction. Then the stately coachman, who is usually a very handsome man, enveloped in his long blue caftan, which is tight at the top and falls in ample folds below—the fine and delicate sledge covers, bordered with fur—the neat glittering harness of the horses—all this produces the most beautiful effect as the vehicle flies over the white snow.

#### THE LIONS OF RIGA.

In such delightful and graceful equipages, the lions of Riga are very soon seen, more especially as they are all comprised within the old town. They are,

1. The sixteen churches of the town, of which six are Lutheran, eight Greek, one Catholic, and one Reformed. The *Domkirche* (cathedral) is the most distinguished of the Lutheran churches, and contains the graves of the first bishops of Riga. The church of St. Peter's is distinguished by its steeple, which is the highest in the whole Russian empire.

2. The castle, the oldest building in the town, and once the residence of the grand-masters of the order. In the interior of the court is the statue of the grand-master, Walter von Tlettenberg, its builder. It is now the dwelling of the governor-general of Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland.

3. The Black Chiefs; a knightly association of the young unmarried citizens of Riga, which was formed in the middle ages in imitation of the order. It was a brotherhood of arms, for the defence of the town and its interests, and, like most of such fraternities, in times of peace it used its power against its fellow citizens, and always played an important part in all internal dissensions. Brotherhoods of Black Chiefs arose in other towns of Livonia, in Wolmar, Dorpat, Reval, and Narva. They are now nothing but a name, and even the name exists only in Riga and Reval; and even in those towns they are little more than convivial clubs for the rich young merchants, who are very exclusive in the reception of new members, and who quit the fraternity when they marry.

4. The citadels and arsenal. The fortifications of Riga have often in

ancient times witnessed bloodshed, and, till 1710, many valiant citizens expired on its walls. Since then they have enjoyed a full century of peace, and Livonia, which had been a continual bone of contention between the northern powers, and had been constantly the seat of war, has not once shared in the convulsions which have shaken Europe since 1710. Even the invasion of the French in 1812, and the insurrection of the Poles in 1830, did not reach Riga. The French and Prussians under Oudinot, occupied Mitau and its environs, but did not attack Riga, though under a false alarm of their approach, General Essen, who commanded at Riga, set fire to the suburbs, the whole of which fell a prey to the flames. The Poles did not even reach Mitau; their nearest skirmish took place four miles south of Riga. Riga is one of the most important fortresses of Russia, and its arsenal contains arms for nearly 50,000 men.

5. The town library. The most interesting curiosities of the town library at Riga, consists of an arm-chair that once belonged to Charles XII., a very old and curious Bible, some letters written by Luther to the senate of Riga, some autographs of Herder, who was once a teacher at the gymnasium here, and a ball shot into the wall of the library by Peter the Great's own hand, at the siege of 1710. It is certainly rather extraordinary that Peter should have hit the library, which is the exact centre of the town; but still more wonderful is the penetration and watchfulness of the inhabitants of Riga, who, in the midst of all the confusion of the siege, could not only distinguish from the walls the figure of the emperor in the midst of the smoke, but could follow the flight of the ball from the cannon's mouth through the air, between all the house-gables, and church-towers, and crooked turnings, till it landed in the wall of their library.

6. The gardens. As Riga has not yet disarmed its thorny, frowning ring of fortifications, as our German cities have, it is not encircled by handsome palaces and beautiful gardens, as they are. All, however, that could be done in such an unfriendly climate has been done. The open spaces between the Old City and the suburbs are filled with avenues, groves, meadows, and flower-gardens. The principal avenue round the town, is called the Esplanade. Riga is indebted for it to one of her best governors, the Marquis Paulucci, who planted it in what was previously the dirtiest, ugliest, and most disreputable quarter of the town. Even superior to these Boulevards, are the gardens open to the public, among which are the Imperial Garden, and that of Consul Wöhrmann. The former has many fine old trees, among which is an elm planted by Peter the Great's own hands. Consul Wöhrmann's garden is very elegantly laid out in the English style. Further out in the country the inhabitants of Riga have many pleasure-gardens and villas. Though in the sandy deltas of the Dwina, these gardens cannot possess the beauty and splendour of those round Bremen and Hamburg, yet the unbounded hospitality and social spirit of their owners, make a summer Sunday spent among them extremely delightful. Their grapes, indeed, are almost always sour, their apricots tasteless, and their other fruits appear to me to want the flavour, aroma, and delicacy of those in Northern Germany; but the more Nature refuses her gifts to man, the more efforts he makes to obtain them. The hothouses and forcing gardeners are far better here than with us. The art of forcing plants is peculiarly a northern art; it is understood

better in Europe than in India, in Germany than in Italy, and many German gardeners have assured me, that it is necessary to go to Russia to see the art in its real perfection. The forcing gardeners of Riga frequently afford the luxurious citizens the pleasure of driving through a snow-storm to a dinner where asparagus, beans, cauliflowers, and other summer gifts are served up in profusion.

## THE TRADE AND SHIPPING OF RIGA.

Riga is the most ancient maritime city of this part of the world, and has the most trade of any city in the Russian empire, except St. Petersburg. Its beautiful river, the Dwina, connects it with many different countries. It serves as an export and import harbour for Eastern Courland, Southern Livonia, Eastern Lithuania, and the provinces of Witepsk and Smolensk. The principal wares which Riga exports from these districts are corn, linseed, flax, hemp, timber, and tallow. Of all the different kinds of grain shipped from Riga, rye takes the first place. Courland furnishes little linseed, flax, or hemp; Livonia more, and Lithuania and White Russia most. These damp countries grow the best flax and hemp in the world, and Riga is celebrated all over Europe for its hemp. In order to preserve the reputation of their hemp and flax unspotted, the town has appointed the corporation called "Braker." These "Braker" examine the hemp and flax, and determine their quality upon oath; they throw the bad out of the market, and what they consider good they divide into three or four classes, according to the quality. This public criticism of the merchandise must lessen the chances of deception, and render the business easy and expeditious to the foreign trader. To sell "unbraked" wares is a punishable offence. There exist also "Braker" in Libau, Pernau, St. Petersburg, &c.; but those of St. Petersburg have the reputation of being corruptible judges. Thirty or forty years ago the mark of the Riga Braker enjoyed such celebrity throughout the whole commercial world, that even in distant Spain, a bale of hemp or flax bearing the official stamp, passed from hand to hand without further examination, every merchant readily paying for it the price corresponding to the mark that it bore.

Thick as the column of Alexander at St. Petersburg, lofty as the tower of a church, are the majestic old ancestral pines and firs in the forests of Volhymnia, Polesia, and even White Russia, from whose marshes arise as perfect samples of those trees as are to be found anywhere. The axe of Riga has for centuries been busy in those districts, rooting up the mightiest trees for the navies of Holland and England, planting them again in the salt waves of the sea, replacing their green branches by variegated flags and streamers, their leaping squirrels by climbing sailors, their silent leisure by bustling toil, and their long stationary repose by incessant locomotion. The timber merchants of Riga send skilful *tree-climbers* into these forests. These *tree-climbers*, who are of course people of some knowledge and experience, measure the circumference and the height of the tree, judge of the internal quality of its wood by certain outward signs, and climbing from top to bottom among its branches, examine it in every part. If they find the tree well suited for a mast, or for any other purpose for which it is required, they mark it for felling, but this felling takes place afterwards at their own risk. That is to say, if the wood, when brought to Riga, is not found to be of the quality expected, they have to bear the loss. The *tree-climbers*



are of course well paid for their difficult and responsible task; the mere climbing and marking of a large forest-tree costs from eight to ten silver rubles. These trees often spend two years on their journey from their native forests to the harbour of Riga.

There are "Braker" at Riga for the examination and classification of timber, as well as of hemp; but there are many more classes of the former than of the latter. Though tallow is one of its articles of trade, Riga does not export so much of it as St. Petersburg and Odessa. Most of these wares go to England. Of the 1300 or 1500 ships which pass annually in and out of the harbour of Riga, about 600 are English; and these carry away with them merchandise to the amount of 30,000,000 rubles banco, while the whole export of Riga amounts only to 50,000,000 rubles.

According to the calculations of Hupel and Tilling, the number of ships which arrived annually at Riga at different times, was the following:

In the year 1766	... 612 ships.	In the year 1810	... 400 ships.
1768	... 541	1811	... 360
1770	... 609	1812	... 600
1771	... 752	1813	... 630
1774	... 779	1814	... 777
1775	... 849	1815	... 900
1805	... 2084	1816	... 950
1806	... 2011	1817	... 1761
1807	... 1141	1818	... 1400
1808	... 286	1819	... 1300
1809	... 752		

At the end of April the first swallows and the first ships generally arrive together at Riga, and May is the most busy month in the year. The two miles between Riga and the mouth of the Dwina cannot be passed without pilots, as, although the river itself is broad enough, the navigable channel is very narrow, and though the frequent complaints of the inhabitants of Riga of the continual increase of the sand in their river, may, in some measure, be unfounded, yet the continual alterations in the position of the sand-banks are very troublesome.

Of all the various operations which the hemp and flax of Riga have to undergo, before we can wear them in the shape of fine white linen, by no means the least important is the packing them in the ships. I know not whether the manner in which this is done here is peculiar to Riga, but certainly the operation nowhere presents itself so continually to the eyes of the traveller.

The operation is called here "*Stauen*," and the packing people "*Stauer*." These *Stauer*, with their apprentices, masters, and journeymen, form a regular guild by themselves. The bales of flax and hemp are generally loosely flung together, in half or whole bales, in the "*Strusen*," or river-ships, which convey them to Riga, as of course the saving of room there is not so great an object as at sea. The packing for sea is as follows: The first bales are stuffed in tightly with the hands into the furthest corners of that part of the ship intended for stowing them; but with the other bales, unassisted human strength would not be sufficient, to press together the whole elastic mass of threads. The *stauer* therefore take strong iron screws, each of which is turned by four men, and by the help of these the bales are squeezed into a third or fourth of the space they originally

occupied. Three, four, or five of such screws are used, according to the size of the ship, and the skill of the *stauer* is shown, in rightly placing these screws, which are supported by the beams of the ship, and which, when turned by from twelve to twenty men, often strain the vessel very much. The *stauer* must be able to judge exactly how much strain each part of the ship will bear. These *stauer* all begin screwing together, and in doing so raise a song in chorus, whose tune gives due emphasis to their screwing, and which lasts till the bales are sufficiently squeezed together. Sometimes a whole line of contiguous hemp-ships begin screwing at once, in the harbour, and it is curious and interesting then to climb from one deck to another, and listen to the often truly beautiful strains of Russian, Lettish, and Polish song, that rise in chorus from the dark holds of the ships.

The *strusen* of Riga, with their combustible cargoes of hemp and flax, have often been very dangerous to the town, on account of the carelessness of the Russians, with respect to fire. Boats, laden with hemp, have often floated down the river in full blaze, and have excited no little dismay in the harbour. The following anecdote was related to me by a friend at Riga.

One evening the alarm of fire arose in the town and harbour. Four burning *strusen* came floating down the river, straight towards the wooden bridges, where lay from 400 to 500 ships. All was in alarm. The bridges were torn up to let at least some of the ships escape, the sailors attempted to draw up the anchors, but the burning *strusen* were fast approaching, and the greatest loss seemed unavoidable, when, all at once, the four vessels slackened their pace, then stood still, and at length, as if drawn by an unseen hand, floated slowly back up the river, till they stuck on a sand-bank, where they quietly burnt away, without doing the least damage to the rest of the shipping. The people shouted "a miracle!" and some persisted that they had seen angels descend from Heaven, and draw the ships back.

The fact, however, was, that the burning vessels on their way had warmed the air behind them, which produced a stream of cold air towards them, from all sides. Behind them the cold and warm air gradually mingled, but before them the greatest degrees of heat and cold met suddenly. At the time when the fire was strongest, therefore, the wind in front blew most strongly, and drove back the dreaded *strusen*.

#### SOCIETY AND POPULAR FESTIVITIES.

The whole social life of the Baltic provinces, both of the citizens in the towns and the nobility, in the country has, as I have said, a peculiar and agreeable character of its own. All are sociable, polite, obliging, and hospitable, and are decidedly prepossessed in favour of strangers. Many will declare that this no longer applies to Riga, yet I think it still does in a great measure, although the good old German city is undoubtedly undergoing a rapid *Russification*; but a cohesive, old, Gothic capital like Riga, does not change so very soon, and plenty of its old praiseworthy features remain. In Riga the rich live and let live, and enjoy their wealth, without at all despising the poverty of others. That earthly treasure has not fallen to a man's lot, is in Riga no hinderance to his entrance into the best society, provided he be an enjoying and enjoyable being. Different ranks and classes are not so sharply divided as with us, and no one asks

after the rank, origin, or birth of a stranger. The man himself is alone looked to, and if he is endurable he will be endured.

Among the national festivals, in which all classes of society at Riga take part, the most celebrated are "the Flower Feast," and the Feast of "Hunger Sorrow."

The Riga Flower Feast is about the prettiest festival that can be seen anywhere. It is kept on St. John's day, the 24th of June, but dates back into Pagan times, and was only in later ages blended with the festival of the Christian saint. The old heathen Lettes had a goddess of joy, flowers, and the spring, whom they called "*Ligho*," and in whose honour they instituted this festival. They adorned themselves with flowers, and assembling by the side of their lakes, rivers, and springs, sacrificed to the goddess, by throwing a few of their treasures into the water, and then danced, played, feasted, and sang the whole of the day and the following night. It is still the same, and the only difference is that Christian service is performed in the churches, and the name of "*Yanne*" (Johnny) is added to that of *Ligho* in the songs; the burden being always "*Ligho! Yanne! Ligho*" (Joy, Johnny, joy). This day is the greatest festival of the year to the Lettes. They sing, dance, and drink all day, and decorate themselves and their dwellings with flowers and branches, while their *Ligho* songs resound incessantly throughout the day and night, in the fields and forests around. Fir branches are strewn about in rooms, and the roofs of houses are covered with green boughs. In the middle of their courts they erect young birch-trees, from which every *John* who enters the court may pluck a branch, for which, however, he is expected if not a poor man to leave behind him a token of his liberality.

From far and near, from the whole surrounding country, the peasants assemble on this day, with flowers and garlands, on an open space near the city, and open a very pleasing market. The forests and meadows of this country furnish many wild plants of the kind called everlasting and evergreen; the roses, too, are particularly abundant at this season. Confectionery and fruit-shops and theatrical show-booths are not wanting, and at night all is beautifully illuminated. Old and young, rich and poor, the whole city of Riga dance, play, and sing amid flowers on the banks of the Dwina, or on the river itself, in flower-decked gondolas. St. John himself is little attended to. He must content himself with the fires which, in this, as in other Christian countries, are lighted up in his honour.

The second feast, in August, that of Hunger Sorrow, is no less pleasing than the flower feast. It is held in remembrance of a siege, in which Riga suffered greatly from famine. On the anniversary of its rescue, all who suffer from hunger and sorrow are feasted and regaled at the cost of the city. On an open space near the town, tables are spread, to which a good appetite is the only ticket of admittance required.

For those who have money as well as appetite, there are eating-houses of another kind. The citizens and their wives go on pilgrimages to the different banquet-tables in remembrance of their brave forefathers, rejoice in the peace of the present, enjoy the good gifts before them, and diffuse their bounty to the needy and poor.

This festival is the more lively in consequence of its falling on the same day as the Russian Fruit Consecration. The feasts of Pomona must have very much resembled the Russian Feast of Fruit. All the kinds of fruit which ripen at this time, early apples, plums, pears, &c., are brought in



great quantities to the markets, and round the churches, where the dealers sit in long rows. Before this day, be they ever so ripe, no Russian will taste autumn fruits; after this day, no degree of unripeness will deter them. The country people hasten early to the churches, laden with sacks of apples, pears, and plums.

The Russian service is then performed, after which the dealers turn out their fruit into plates and dishes, forming long avenues in the churches, with wide walks between. The priests now enter in procession, singing and sprinkling the fruit with holy water. The moment this is concluded, the "munching" commences, and in the streets, markets, and churches, old and young are busy in the consumption of apples, pears, and plums, with honey and milk. The children eat as much fruit as they like, for consecrated dainties cannot hurt them. Even infants at the breast receive thick pears to suck, the priests stand at the church-doors munching apples, the poorest beggars receive whole sacks full of apples, pears, and other eatables, and all rejoice together in the bounty of Pomona. It will be seen that this Russian feast of fruit consecration harmonizes very well with that of Hunger Sorrow.

#### THE "HOFCHEN" OF RIGA.

Sand, heath, and marsh, are the principal features in the environs of Riga, and in summer the intolerable dust thrown up from the sand spoils all enjoyment. It has often been proposed to level and cultivate the sand hills, and to convert the barren heaths into fruitful districts; but invincible difficulties have always opposed themselves to these plans.

The environs of Riga are as desolate as those of Mitau, to the traveller who only passes through, without strolling about to discover all the snug retreats of men that he hidden amid the forests, lakes, and marshes.

The merchants of Riga, on the contrary, have sought out all the dry spots in the delta of the Dwina, and decorated them with neat, unassuming, but charming little country-houses. These pretty villas are called *Höfchen*, and multitudes of these *Höfchen* surround Riga. Every moderately wealthy merchant has some such retreat, where he passes a part of the summer with his family and his friends, in the exercise of graceful and liberal hospitality. The names of most of these *Höfchen* end with "*holm*," as Parzenholm, Schlumpholm, Steenholm, &c.

Further down the Dwina, at its mouth, lie Bolderaa and Dünamünde; further up the Dwina are three active German cities, closely connected with Riga: Friedrichstadt, nine miles distant; Jacobstadt nine miles from Friedrichstadt; and Dünaburg, nine miles from Jacobstadt. These little towns are all inhabited by Germans and Lettes, and the same remarks will apply to them that have already been made of other small places in these provinces. They all suffered terribly in the wars between the Swedes, Poles, and Russians. They have often in one year been successively burnt and sacked by three or four different parties.

Of the castles and *Höfchen*, the following are the most important:

Uexküll, belonging to the well-known Uexküll family. Further up the river are Jungfernhof, Kohenhusen, and Stockmannshof, the cheerful residence of the wealthy Löwenstern family. The two last have been sung by Kotzebue and Schlippenbach. Then comes Kreutzburg, an old posses-

sion of the noble family of Korff, and still further on are the estates of the Plater-Syberg family.

We read not in geographies of these estates, and yet they exercise a far greater influence over the country and its inhabitants than many of the towns.

To the estate of Kreutzburg alone are attached 18,000 human subjects, while the Burgermeisters of the three small towns just named, put together, scarcely rule as many; and these three towns do not together export as much corn, wood, flax, &c., as this one estate.

#### THE ISLAND OF RUNOE.

Twelve miles from the mouth of the Dwina, six miles from the eastern coast of Courland, and the western coast of Livonia, lies far from any other island, in the midst of the Riga Gulf, the solitary little island of Runoe. It is an unimportant piece of land, half-a-mile long, and half-a-mile broad, but even its very name, the Isle of Runes, excites peculiar expectation; and in fact it differs essentially from the Esthonian, Livonian, and Lettish coasts by which it is surrounded.

They were German Scandinavians who christened the island, and separated it politically and morally from the surrounding nations, as completely as the waves do physically. It is unknown to us when, why, and how the Swedes settled in Runoe, and whether they found aboriginal inhabitants there or not. Enough, it is now inhabited by a people of Swedish origin, who remember nothing, however, of their mother country, and have no patriotism but for their sandy islet. They and their ancestors have been there since the memory of man, cultivating their sandy plains, catching seals, and sailing about between Courland, Livonia, and Oesel.

The island is very flat, without hills or rocks, and by no means of a picturesque aspect. On the whole its coast is as smooth as its surface, without any break or ruggedness whatever. Here and there very small bays run into the shore, which are used as landing places by the inhabitants. The island is very sandy, and has no rivers or streams. It is therefore not very fruitful, and though the islanders grow some corn, yet their harvests are not sufficient for their own consumption, and they buy a part of their bread from the more fertile continent.

Formerly the island may have been covered with forests, but the inhabitants have built so many boats, and warmed themselves for so many winters, that those forests are now very much thinned. Scattered oaks, birches, firs, and bushes, alone remain.

As the winds and waves wafted over the seeds of oaks, firs, and birches, so the human settlers carried with them multitudes of all kinds of animals, oxen, horses, sheep, &c. The Runoe sheep is of the Oesel race; which is farfamed here, for its long silky wool. The oxen and horses are of the same small breed found in all these northern countries. Wild beasts there are none. Perhaps, once in every ten or twenty years, a wolf or fox strays in winter from the ice of the Riga Gulf to the coast of Runoe, where the excellent shots of the islanders soon end his career.

Small and unfruitful as is the island itself, yet the sea which surrounds it is rich in produce, abundance of turbot, haddock, sturgeon, and seals, as well as amber, being caught there. The sea is therefore the field, the pasture, the garden, the road of the islanders, and the scene of all their

labours and amusements. They take whole shiploads of turbot, haddocks and *Strömlinge*, to Riga, Pernau, and the small harbours of Hapsal and Arensburg. In all these harbours the bold fishermen of Runoe are well known, and their wares readily accepted. The produce of this fishery, however, is unimportant, and only helps them to sugar, coffee, and a few other luxuries. Their principal subsistence is derived from the seal fishery, which they follow in winter. The vessels in which they go in pursuit of these animals are small, without a deck, and carry but one sail, and in such a fragile vessel it is that they often brave the sea for months together, with its icebergs, storms, and all the other terrors of a northern winter. They generally carry with them provisions for two months, and take leave of their wives for life or death. They either shoot the seals with muskets, or kill them with clubs or harpoons. All these weapons, including the muskets, they make by themselves. The powder they buy at Riga. Their fishery is almost always very successful. As they generally know how to escape safe and sound from the icebergs and storms, they return with full ships to their island, where their wives, when at length they espy the anxiously awaited little fleet on the horizon, receive them with shouts and bonfires, and prepare a general banquet. The skins are pulled off the seals and dried on the ice, the flesh is packed in tubs, and sent to the harbours. As the seal fishery is the joint undertaking of all the islanders, so the profit is common to all, and when their merchandise is disposed of at Riga or Pernau, the money is equally divided among all. All purchases for the island, either of corn, sugar, coffee, tea, or other things, are made in common, and afterwards divided in proportion to the share contributed by each to the seal expedition. In the same way they pay their tribute to the Russian government conjointly.

All the inhabitants of Runoe are of equal rank; none thinks himself of better blood than another, and all are freemen and joint owners of land and sea. Never did a nobleman possess a spot of land in Runoe. Serfs are unknown there.\* The wild sea, which for a great part of the year completely separates the islanders from all the rest of the world, has saved them from slavery. They have their old privileges, respected even by the mighty Emperor of all the Russias, the most important of which is that they are not called on to contribute recruits to the Russian army. They are very lightly taxed, each inhabitant, on an average, contributing about a silver ruble yearly to the imperial treasury. Russians never enter their island. The only authorities they have are their "*Hakenrichter*," always a German, and their Lutheran pastor.

This Runoe pastor, with his family and that of the *Hakenrichter*, compose the whole of what may be called the cultivated society of the island. The pastor is the only man who studies books, reads newspapers, and takes care that Runoe do not lag behind the age in intelligence. He is the most celebrated pastor perhaps in all the Baltic provinces. All the world knows the pastor of Runoe, and all sorts of comical stories of his way of life are narrated in Riga, Courland, Arensburg, and Esthonia. Much may be exaggerated, but certain it is that in the reading of newspapers the pastor acts on the following plan:—in spring, when, after six or seven months isolation, Runoe again opens a communication with the rest of the

\* The other islands of the Riga Gulf, as Oesel, Dagoe, &c., are all divided into large estates, with serfs attached to them.



world, he buys the whole last year's newspapers, and begins reading the events of the last spring, so that on the 1st of June he reads what has been published at Riga just that day twelvemonth; on the 2d of June he reads the news of the preceding 2d of June, and so on. He is conscientiously exact, and never touches on the one day the newspaper of the next, in order that he may not spoil his own and his wife's sport, as they go limping together after Time at a regular distance. Every morning he asks his wife, "Well, my dear, what's the news to-day?" and then she fetches a fresh sheet from the precious packet, and lays it beside his coffee cup. The pastor peeps anxiously through the thick veil wherewith fate, or rather the pastor himself, hides the past, which is his future. During the summer, indeed, his reverence might if he pleased obtain newer papers from Riga, but it is to be remembered that the revenues of the holy man are not large, and that he cannot afford to have his journal otherwise than at *secondhand*. As in winter, moreover, he would be obliged to fast for seven months from news, were he even the crowned Emperor of Runoe, he prefers buying a whole set secondhand at Riga, and keeping strictly to his settled plan of reading.

A pastor who occupied the pulpit of Runoe, during the first third of the present century, was called Elephant—and, oh! wonderful influence of a name on flesh and blood—pastor Elephant was so fat and bulky that the boatmen were never satisfied with an ordinary fare, when they had to convey him to Arensburg. His parishioners, who sometimes in spite of the reverence due to the holy man would joke with one another about his size, would often say, "*Ach Gott!* If all our seals were as thick as our pastor Elephant, how watertight our blubber would make all the boots in Livonia, and what good traders we should be for the bread, sugar, and butter dealers of Riga!"

One of the principal privileges of Runoe is that of exercising its own iurisdiction. All private quarrels are settled by an assembly of the elders, or as supreme court of appeal, by the Pastor and *Hakenrichter*. Great crimes are unknown in their sandy paradise. Should such a thing happen, by any chance, the criminal is handed over to the authorities of Riga, who then deal with him according to the laws of the empire. The most severe punishment to which the islanders themselves ever have recourse, is exclusion from their society and banishment from Runoe.

If the inhabitants find among them a girl of bad character, a profligate, a thief, a drunkard, or a lazy seal-catcher, they first warn the offender. The relations, the pastor, and *Hakenrichter* reprimand him. If he improves, all is well, and there is a general rejoicing. If all these warnings are in vain, and the culprit shows no signs of amendment, the authorities of the island assemble and pass sentence of banishment. The delinquent is thrust into a ship and conveyed to the mainland, where there is no lack of vagabonds to keep him in countenance, and where his peculiar talents may be found of more value than at happy Runoe.

The inhabitants cling fast to their old privilege, and maintain the strictest discipline in the island. A few years ago it happened that an offending countryman was banished from their island for his sins. The criminal wished to return, and complained to the governor of Riga that his countrymen withheld from him his rights as an inhabitant of Runoe. The governor commanded the islanders immediately to take him back, as every one who had not been formally condemned to imprisonment or

transportation, had, by the laws of the empire, a right to live at his birth-place. But the inhabitants of Runoe refused to obey this command, and appealed to the imperial governor-general of the Baltic provinces. He, however, confirmed the governor's decision, and gave the islanders to understand that the man had a right to return to Runoe, and that they must give up their ridiculous whims about peculiar laws, privileges, &c. They then sent a deputation to St. Petersburg to the emperor himself, and setting forth to the exalted authority that rules over the rights and safety of his subjects how their ancient privileges had been violated by the imperial governors, they most submissively implored His Imperial Majesty to command that their ancestral rights and hereditary simplicity of morals should be left them. They had, they said, many good and guiltless islanders among them, but one was a rogue, and unworthy to dwell at Runoe, and him they had banished; if he was forced upon them the purity and moral worth of their community would suffer. They implored his Imperial Majesty to continue his gracious protection to his faithful subjects, and not to suffer them to be corrupted by the worthless and immoral. The Emperor granted these loyal entreaties, and the offender never returned to Runoe.

In former times they made shorter work with criminals, and often sent them to keep company with the seals. They were going to throw one of their earlier pastors into the sea because he was too fond of brandy. They had often implored the High Consistorium at Riga, to send them another shepherd. Their prayers were unheard, so they sent word that if another minister was not sent them within fourteen days, and their present one taken away, they would throw him into the sea, where the toper might quench his thirst to his heart's content. The Consistorium was frightened, and complied with their wishes.

The pastor preaches to his congregation in Swedish, the native language of Runoe; when at Riga, Pernou, Arensburg, &c., the islanders speak Plattdeutsch. They are very stout, strong-built men, and resemble the Swedish peasants. The complexion of the women is remarkably fair and blooming; they are all light-haired, and there is not a single brunette on the island.

Their costume is quite Swedish. The men wear boots, a dignity to which the Lettes and Esthonians, their neighbours, never attain, except when stewards to Germans. The women weave a light gray cloth, of which they make short coats or tunics reaching to the knee. These coats are fastened at the middle by a broad leathern girdle, into which a large knife is generally stuck. A leathern pocket hangs at the side, and a broad-brimmed hat completes the dress.

Their houses are almost always of stone. Wood is preferred in the north, but is a rare article at Runoe, as in the other islands of the Baltic. The houses at Runoe are neat, clean, and convenient; and are never without chimneys, as the Esthonian houses are. The inhabitants of Runoe are not only distinguished by strict integrity and great purity of morals, but also by a high degree of intelligence. There are on the island schools at which the children learn to read and write Swedish.

## FROM RIGA TO DORPAT.

At length came the day when the Riga diligence was to convey me yet further northward. The waiter of the hotel where I lodged bid me farewell with pathetic sorrow, in return for a small consideration of *Trinkgeld*; no other creature said adieu to the stranger. The posthorses stretched their long, sleepy legs, and the diligence set slowly forth, through the dark narrow streets of Riga. The houses of the city lay still silently sunk in deep sleep, their eyes, the windows, fast closed; their lips, the doors, all shut; their chimneys not yet breathing forth the morning smoke. Here and there a house had raised its sleepy eyelids, the window-shutters, or had yawned open its lips, from which its soul, the owner, was looking forth into the opening day.

Our indifferent eyes looked unmoved on all these nests of human life, after which many an exile's lonely heart may have yearned in vain. At length we slowly emerged from the dark, crooked, compact, old German kernel of the city, into the bright, variegated, gaudy, shell of its suburbs. The pavement grew better, the horses more active, and we soon left the suburbs for the flat open country. I looked back to old Riga, that now lay far on the horizon,—the houses gradually lost themselves in the morning mist—the gilt cupola of St. Peter's, and the tower of the Domkirche alone remained. At length a low thicket hid these giants—the last traces of Riga were lost, and we were alone in the barren and monotonous wilderness.

I now turned to examine my travelling companions. They consisted of a few students of Dorpat, some inhabitants of St. Petersburg, and two Finland merchants, returning from their travels in Germany. The St. Petersburgers were perfectly silent the whole time, and the students merry and riotous. The merchants related to me many amusing particulars of the society of the northern towns of Wiborg, Willmanstrand, Helsingfors, and Nystadt. They spoke of Germany with the bitterness of disappointed men. To the inhabitants of the north, Germany is what Italy is to us. They expect every thing, and find of course less than they expect. Experiencing every day the rude ungenial aspect of Nature in their own country, and hearing constantly of the warm smiling south, they imagine Germany to be the loveliest of countries, with the mildest air, and most delicious climate. Civilization having advanced but little in their northern latitudes, they imagine the lowest classes even in Germany, perfect in agriculture, education, arts, and sciences. Many imagine that roses grow there in every corner, that every hut is surrounded by beautiful gardens, and hung with creeping vines; that all fields and forests are in perfect order, and every man, woman, and child, is sensible, honest, faithful, refined, and polite.

Finding among us, on the contrary, not a few ugly districts, many ill-kept fields and gardens, and no lack of rogues and blockheads, there is no end to their disappointment.

"Ah!" said a Russian, who had never been in Germany, to me once, "in Russia things are not as in your country, where the daughters of every mechanic play the piano, where almost every peasant receives a learned education, and where the poorest inhabitant can converse sensibly



of history and politics." "In your happy Germany," said another, "one may indeed live freely. There every one has what he deserves, the poor are faithful, free, and incorruptible, and the great, mild, merciful, and unoppressing.

When such enthusiasts come to Germany they are disappointed because every village girl cannot welcome them with the symphonies of Mozart and Beethoven, nor every country schoolboy talk Latin, nor every peasant discuss the career and history of Napoleon, Cæsar, or Alexander the Great. The disappointed travellers return surly and ill-humoured, cursing the falsehood of all they have heard concerning German refinement, intelligence, and freedom, and having before entertained far too Utopian an idea of us, they revenge themselves by unjust and absurd detraction. This applies not merely to the natives of Esthonia, Livonia, and Finland, but to the Russians, Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians also. Sand, marsh, heath, and forest, followed incessantly by more sand, marsh, heath and forest, form, in monotonous and unbroken order, the dreary road to Dorpat. This is the most barren and ugliest district in Livonia. Behind it lies the fertile shore of the Dwina, to the left the magnificent ocean, and to the right the Livonian paradise, as it is called; but these were all unseen to us, and contributed nothing towards the enlivening of our journey.

The Livonian paradise lies along the Aa, surrounding the town of Wenden, and the estates of Kremon, Treiden, and Segewolde. This fertile district is surrounded by hills, crowned by majestic old oaks and birch-trees. The cheerful little town of Wenden reposes in the valley like a smiling infant in its cradle; and the small stream of the Aa sparkles in its windings around the hills.

We passed a narrow road that led through the fields to the three estates of Kremon, Treiden, and Segewolde, which lie close together. The road, which was cut up by numberless old and fresh ruts made by carriage wheels, disappeared after many windings, behind the distant hills. How gladly would I have turned and followed these traces; for, in Livonia, such paths always lead to handsome castles, pleasant gardens, and hospitable, merry, kind-hearted, domestic circles. But our post conductor inexorably directed our course through the deserts to the right of the Aa, past the stations of Roop, Stolben, Lenzenhof, and Papendorf; and the estates of Aegypten, Nachtigallen, Portugal, Urbs, Kaulbarsch, Salesbury, &c.

Towards evening we reached Wolmar, the only village besides Walk, on the whole road between Riga and Dorpat. There are no villages or towns in all Livonia, except Riga, Dorpat, and Pernau, Wolmar, Walk, Lemsal, Wenden, Fellin, and Werro; although Livonia contains 840 square miles! This makes one town or village to every 100 (German) square miles—about the most thinly-built country in civilized Europe. Even Finland and Poland have many more towns than Livonia, and Germany counts at least twenty towns, on the same space of ground where, in Livonia, there stands but one.

We arrived at Wolmar in the evening. The little town had a look at once cheerful and tranquil. The streets were wide and straight, the houses clean and handsome, and all the windows gleamed with lights, reminding the wayfarer of the comforts of the social circle. Not all the convulsions of modern Europe, not the seven years war, the Polish insurrections, or the devastating thunder-storms that made the names of Napoleon Bonaparte, and the French revolution a terror to the world, have affected or disturbed

Wolmar, and its Livonian sister towns. The waves of the restless ocean have stormed past them incessantly, but have not troubled their repose.

The small towns of Livonia do not, like those of Germany, keep pace with the spirit of the age, or take advantage of the new materials and circumstances arising around them. They have not supplied the decay of feudal institutions, with the industry, intelligence, and mental activity of the 19th century. They are gradually sinking into absolute nothingness. Not a single branch of art, manufacture, science, or industry of any kind, could be mentioned, in which any of these towns excel. Their literary activity is equally insignificant. Some time ago, a few of these little towns agreed to publish a weekly newspaper in common. They succeeded in scraping together some interesting matter, which they published in the first number, but the next week a new number was wanted, and all they had to say had been already published. In order, therefore, not to go to the ground immediately they republished the first number, and the subscribers had to take it as a new and improved edition. The third week, however, came and all were in despair, for in no way could they collect matter for a third number; and, in order not to warm up the same dish a third time, the periodical declared itself insolvent, and the undertaking exploded amidst general laughter.

This part of the country has one natural production, famed all over the shirt and stocking-wearing world, namely, the Livonian flax and linseed. The peculiar excellence of Livonian flax is a riddle to the agriculturist; whether it is the soil in which it grows, the water with which it is "braked" or the treatment which it receives, that gives it its great value, or whether a particularly vigorous and excellent specimen of the flax plant was originally conveyed from Eden to Livonia, enough, no weaver or agriculturist in all Europe denies the superiority of Livonian flax and linseed. The best of the best, however, grows at Marienburg; it is an ell in length, as fine as the finest hair, of the healthiest colour, and soft and shining as silk. It is a pleasure to see the laden flax waggons at the Marienburg market; they appear like waggon loads of the brightest silk.

The seven miles after Wolmar, we passed in total darkness, seeing neither sun, moon, or stars. In the morning we reached a little town, called Walk; this town was formerly a busy little rival to Wolmar, but the grass now grows so high in its streets, that it is said the little cowherds sometimes cut it as fodder for their cattle.

In Walk the Lettish dialect is still spoken, but just beyond it begins the territory of the Esthonians. The Lettes and Esthonians are two very different races, and they hate one another with all the bitter animosity of contiguous nations. They never intermarry or mingle. The best Lettes inhabit the south, and the best Esthonians the north; the frontier country, it is said, contains the worst of both.

The only thing which attracted our attention, on the road from Walk to Dorpat, was Schloss Ringen, formerly one of the largest castles in Livonia, out now a picturesque ruin. These ruins of Ringen are a perpetual monument of the ferocious feuds between two neighbouring noblemen, the Lord of Ringen and the Lord of Odempä. An old family quarrel between them had been heightened by various personal insults into the deadliest mutual hatred. Notwithstanding this, however, they sometimes, when their own interests demanded it, visited and entertained one another with outward

civility. One day the Lord of Ringen invited the Lord of Odempä to a banquet. The latter came, enjoyed the feast much, and was particularly pleased with one costly dish, which his host strongly recommended to him. He wished to know what it was made of, hut this was a secret, said the Lord of Ringen. As the visiter was returning to Adempä, however, a servant was sent after him, with a message, that if he remembered what the Persian king, Cyaxares,\* served up to his servant, Harpagus, he would know how the delicate dish which had pleased him so much was composed. The horror-struck father flew home to seek his only little son, but sought him in vain. The Lord of Ringen had, by way of a practical joke, served up to him for dinner his own son's heart and brains.

The infuriated and deeply-afflicted father it was who laid Schloss Ringen in ruins. He attacked it that same night with all his men, and though the Lord of Ringen was prepared for the attack, yet the superhuman fury of the father, and the justice of his cause, overcame all opposition. The castle was stormed, reduced to ruins, and the hearts and brains of its defenders thrown to the dogs.

The histories of these old Livonian castles are often very romantic and tragical. These bloody feuds have been modified by the spirit of the age, and the animosity of neighbouring nobles now develops itself in interminable litigation.

Our way led through many forests, and past many dwellings, whose inhabitants, seated by their cheerful fires, enjoying their domestic comforts, looked with indifference on the wanderers without. Towards evening a dark indistinct object appeared before us, which gradually stood out more distinctly through the mist. It was the lofty "*Dorpater Dom*" (Cathedral of Dorpat), the only building visible from afar in the concealed city.

#### THE UNIVERSITY OF DORPAT.

The history of Dorpat is a very stirring and stormy one. The attacks of the Russians from the east, and the Knights from the west, the quarrels of both with the aboriginal Esthonians, and the bloody wars between the Russians, Swedes, and Poles, have more than once laid the town in ashes, or levelled it with the ground. Since Peter the Great's time, Dorpat has risen in importance, and has been much altered and improved, so as to be now a handsome, elegant, and new city. With the exception of the old Dom, no vestige remains at Dorpat of the ancient Gothic nucleus of the town; all is new. On the Domberg are situated the library, the observatory, the *clinicum*, the anatomical theatre, the museums, and the dwellings of the professors. The Berg (mountain) is very extensive, and between the buildings has large open spaces, which have been turned into pretty gardens.

The library has a very curious locality, being situated in the ruins of the old Dom. The books are arranged in two halls, standing above one another, around which lie the ruins in the same condition in which they have remained ever since they were made into ruins. They are very interesting and picturesque, and command a beautiful view from every side. On one side the hill forms a precipice from the very edge of the wall. The northern side of the Domberg overlooks the whole town. Between the spectator and the river, on a piece of ground scarcely 400 paces broad,

\*Query: Astyages?



are crowded together the most important buildings of the town, the University, the market-place, the courts of law, the Gostinnoi dvor, the principal shops, &c. To the right and left, where a greater space remains between the Embach and the lofty shore, lie numbers of pretty private dwelling-houses, taverns, &c. Part of the town, though a smaller part, lies on the right side of the Embach. The whole of this handsome little town is surrounded by a very ugly shell of suburbs, inhabited chiefly by Russians and Esthonians.

The University of Dorpat was founded by Gustavus Adolphus, in the year of his death, 1632. In 1656 the place was attacked by the Russians, who drove out all the professors, and destroyed the town. It was restored in 1667, but thirty-two years afterwards the University was transplanted to Pernau. In 1710, together with all its professors, museums, libraries, and students, the University sought refuge in Sweden, in order to avoid the approaching Russian army. We hear nothing of it then for nearly a century; till, in 1802, the Emperor Alexander restored the University of Dorpat, and assigned to it sufficient revenues to enable it to hold out tempting offers to learned foreigners, to undertake scientific journeys, to found museums, &c.

The number of professors now amounts nearly to 40, and that of students has risen since 1802, from 100, to 200, to 400, and finally to 600. In 1840 there were 573 students, 243 of whom were Livonians, 68 Esthonians, 107 Courlanders, 128 Russians, 4 Finlanders, 12 Poles, and 11 foreigners. If we compare the number of Esthonian, Livonian, and Courland students, with the number of inhabitants in their respective provinces, we shall find that one out of every 5000 in Courland, one out of 4000 in Esthonia, one out of 3000 in Livonia, is a student at Dorpat.

The professors are all Germans, with the exception of one young Russian professor of surgery, and the professors of Russian literature. The university is altogether German in spirit, which can be said of no other of the five Russian Universities. The professors and students maintain several literary and scientific societies; there is a Society for the Promotion of Natural History, several reading societies, and a *Professor-Abend*, as it is called, in which all the professors join, to entertain each other by lectures or conversation. Such associations do not exist in the other Russian Universities, where the professors never come together but in full uniform, for the transaction of formal business. At Dorpat the professors live in far more friendly and peaceable relations to each other than at most Universities. This peace, however, though very pleasing at first sight, arises less from a peaceable spirit than from a want of scientific zeal and literary energy. At German Universities the sword is always unsheathed, and the least difference in opinion, on scientific or literary points between two colleges, breaks the truce. At Dorpat, all the learned weapons are left to hang on the walls, all questions calculated to disturb the peace of the community are left untouched, and the worthy professors take good care, above all things, not to let their dinners cool while they quarrel.

The German spirit which prevails in the University of Dorpat gives it great influence in Russia. No one doubts the thorough learning of any student who has passed his examination at Dorpat, and a Dorpat professor is an oracle of wisdom to all. Indeed, the whole of the Baltic provinces exercise the greatest influence over Russia. As the nobility of

these countries supply the Russian armies with generals and statesmen, as their seaports furnish those of Russia with great merchants and traders, so Dorpat supplies men of learning, theoretical and practical. The chief exports of this University, consist in young physicians. Almost every town in Russia has a doctor from Dorpat. Many teachers in private families and schools have been educated at Dorpat, and the same remark applies to the pastors of the different German congregations scattered through Russia. The Dorpat examinations are very strict, and promotion not so easily obtained as with us.

The professors of Dorpat are very well off; they are twice as well paid as with us, and have only half as much to do. After a certain number of years they generally retire on handsome pensions, either to enjoy their *otium cum dignitate* in foreign countries, or as landowners in the Baltic provinces.

The delightful hospitality, the cheerful, friendly, social spirit which reigns at Dorpat, as throughout the Baltic provinces, is probably the cause of the extreme dearth of all literary, that is, *book-writing* activity. It is very seldom indeed, that the Baltic Provinces give birth to a book of the least importance or interest. Now at Dorpat alone there are forty professors, and in the rest of the Baltic provinces about eighty more. When to these we add the many hundreds of preachers, lawyers, and tutors, who have studied and still study, we shall easily find some thousands of the inhabitants who have the requisite ability and leisure to communicate their ideas and the results of their experience to the world, through the medium of the press. All these men, put together, only published 122 works of any kind, from the 1st of January, 1840, to the 1st of October of the same year. Of these, seven were in Latin, seven in Russian, six in Esthonian, eighteen in Lettish, and eighty-four in German. The Latin were dry dissertations of Dorpat professors, The Lettish and Esthonian were religious tracts, prayer-books, and small religious tales. The eighty-four German works consisted chiefly of birthday and funeral odes, small songs and pieces of music, dedications, reports of Bible societies, and other such trifles. I sought in vain among them for one book of any importance.

The whole Baltic provinces have about twenty periodicals; six political (at Reval, Libau, Pernau, Mitau, Riga, and Dorpat), four literary, and three scientific papers; a few devoted to the Lettes and Esthonians, and then a few official papers.

As in these provinces every literary and scientific undertaking of Germany finds its echo, the numerous societies and associations lately instituted among us have met with imitators here. Female associations, musical societies, singing clubs, benevolent associations, Bible societies, literary societies, and scientific societies, abound as in Germany. The following are the principal literary and scientific associations.

1stly. The Courland Society of Literature and Art—2dly. The Riga Society of History and Antiquities—3dly. The Literary Society of the Lettes at Mitau—4thly. The learned Esthonian Association at Dorpat—and, 5thly. The Literary and Practical Association of Burghers at Riga. The collections of the University are not very important. The library contains 30,000 volumes. The zoological and mineralogical collections are very small, though prettily arranged. The greatest lion is in the collection of astronomical instruments; a gigantic refractor presented to

Dorpat by the Emperor Alexander. Of all the collections of the University, however, that of plants, in the Botanical Garden, is the most complete. It contains more than 15,000 living plants, among which are many not to be found in other botanical gardens of Europe.

There are but three booksellers at Dorpat. This is little enough, but the professors generally send to Germany for what books they want. Dorpat has had armed fraternities, like Riga, which here as there have dwindled into mere convivial clubs. Among the treasures of the association are preserved many bacchanalian curiosities; such as a magnificent goblet of glass and gold, two feet high, in the side of which are engraved a beetle, a humming bird, and a butterfly. Whoever could only drink to the beetle was fined two bottles, whoever came to the humming-bird only one, and whoever reached the butterfly was exempt from fine. Dorpat has now 12,000 inhabitants, and its number is perpetually increasing. It belongs to the towns of the second rank, such as Mitau and Reval. All the large towns of the Baltic provinces are continually increasing in population, and the smaller ones decreasing. The reasons of this rise and fall are too complicated to be entered upon at present, but I shall take a later opportunity to make a few remarks upon them.

#### PERNAU, HAPSAL, AND REVAL.

Pernau, a cheerful little town, stands in the same relation to Riga as Windau does to Libau; it lies at the mouth of the river Pernau, and contains about 6000 inhabitants. The Pernau flows from east to west, and joining the river Embach, runs across Livonia into the Peipus lake. These natural advantages determine the commercial relations of the place. Its chief trade is with Dorpat, though the continuous line of navigation between the two towns has been made, in some measure, unserviceable by mills and other works. About 100 ships, in all, yearly come and go to Pernau, and they employ a capital of about 4,000,000 of rubles. The exports are principally corn, wood, and linseed; the imports consist entirely of herrings and salt.

Hapsal is a small harbour in Esthonia, north of Pernau, remarkable only for being the smallest trading port in the Baltic provinces. One postmaster, ten ships, 100 houses, 1000 inhabitants—such are the statistics of Hapsal, and they hardly ever alter in the smallest degree.

Our carriage rolled out of the sandy streets of Pernau, and we soon arrived at Reval. We hastened through the empty suburbs, and it was not till the masses of houses forming the Dom towered picturesquely before us, that we saw some inhabitants in the *Pappelallee* which runs round the city. Our equipage dashed noisily through the dark archway past the lofty walls, and we found ourselves in the midst of the frowning gable-roofs which overhang the narrow streets in gray sullen solemnity. Massive oak-doors and antique gable-windows are on every side; at the cellar-doors sit old women with "*Timpwecken*" (a kind of cake); here and there sparkle the brightly decorated windows of the goldsmiths and watch-makers; unoccupied shopmen stand at their doors staring at the passers by, while the pretty inhabitants of the second or third floor suspend a conversation with their visitors, to examine the passing strangers from their windows. All breathes of repose; even the dogs seem to think it too



troublesome to bark, and stretch themselves carelessly on the little-trodden pavement, while the cats, heedless of our arrival, continue diligently to clean their fur on the thresholds.

Soon we reached the inn, which seemed pervaded by much of the leisurely spirit of the place. We were hospitably received, and in another half hour were comfortably seated at breakfast, and felt ourselves quite at home.

Reval is divided into two parts, the upper and lower town. The former perched on the top of a rocky eminence, encloses within its old Gothic walls the Dom, the castle, with the residence of the governor, the commandant's house, the gymnasium, and about 100 other stone buildings belonging to the nobility. This whole upper part of the town is called the Dom. The lower part is far more spacious, with broad streets stretching to the flat sandy shore of the harbour, and contains, besides the dwellings and warehouses of the merchants, many public buildings, a rath-house, the gilde-house, the house of the black chiefs, some school-houses, a printing-office, a workhouse, a house of correction, the bank, the barracks, a theatre, three libraries, &c. The town has nearly 15,000 inhabitants, 2000 houses, five Russian churches, and one Swedish, one Danish, and four German churches.

Our first walk led us through the chief streets to the Domberg, where reigned a most imposing silence; for the possessors of these aristocratic dwellings inhabit them only twice in the year, once in the middle of winter, and once at the sea-bathing season.

When we had climbed down the Domberg again, we first passed through the narrow *Klostergässchen*, and then through a lonely cavelike passage in the massive gray old walls, till we stood before the newly-decorated halls of the *Olai kirche*. This beautiful old church, one of the most famous in the Baltic provinces, with a tower among the highest in Christendom, was destroyed by fire in 1820, but has since been restored, and the new building was solemnly consecrated in 1840.

Towards evening we entered a pretty little house, where we were very hospitably received. The very style of architecture of these little tenements in Reval, seems to invite to social meetings. Narrow galleries and flights of stairs lead into little low rooms, whose unsymmetrical form contrasts curiously with the order and cleanliness that prevail everywhere. Scarcely any two adjacent rooms are of equal height, and steps up and down lead continually to unexpected nooks and crannies. The warm, snug, hospitable, concealed little rooms, with their low window-ledges, antique clocks, and huge brown Dutch presses, seem to invite the passer-by to enter, and begin to gossip; and pleasant enough I found such chance conversations with the amiable *citizenesses* of Reval, while they accompanied every word with their busy needles.

The rising generation fully shares this passion for stitching, knitting, and netting, with their mothers and aunts, and the smallest little maiden of Reval, sows and knits away the time which she should spend in the enjoyment of air and exercise. A Sunday's finery often costs six busy days of work, and many a refreshing walk is lost in preparing for it. They appear to have quite a passion for sitting still, which is perhaps strengthened by the great number of well-attended girl-schools. As early as eight o'clock in the morning we used to see the little maidens tripping along with their books and slates through the streets with their

companions, in far greater numbers than their brothers. In fact, they are generally looking forward to the important situation of governess in a noble family, a situation which opens to the young ladies of Reval the prospect of a rapid independence. Many of them annually wander forth as governesses to all parts of Russia; but there are still a sufficient number of ladies left at Reval to furnish candidates for every vacancy in the social circle; while of men, comparatively speaking, there seems to be a decided scarcity.

I was surprised to find, when I first went to dip myself in the cold sea, that all the best bathing establishments were conducted by women. As we drove through the suburbs, I also saw the names of widows over all the public-houses.

The political constitution of the town is the same as that of Riga, and the other cities of the Baltic provinces. The nucleus of the population at Reval, as at Riga and Dorpat, is thoroughly German. Even in these provinces, where all social circles are distinguished by a particularly agreeable tone, Reval is pre-eminently famed in this respect. Its most brilliant epoch is in summer, for its sea-baths are the most frequented in the Baltic provinces. The greater part of the Esthonian nobility, and many families from St. Petersburg, come here. Schloss Katherinenthal, with its beautiful gardens, woods, and prospects, forms the central point of all the promenades, balls, illuminations, and pleasure parties. Katharinenthal was laid out by Peter the Great in a marsh, and in the sand, around this beautifully decorated marsh, a town has gradually grown up. The bathing seasons here are extremely brilliant; and the concerts at Katherinenthal are often attended by all the most distinguished nobility of Russia. In fact, the very decayed state of commerce and industry in Reval, is in itself an attraction for fashionable visitors. Had the city more ships and merchants it would have fewer distinguished guests.

#### FROM DORPAT TO NARVA.

It was two o'clock in the morning on the first of February, when, after many a mournful parting with our friends at Dorpat, we again left the hospitable city to proceed on our travels. The streets were pitch dark, and the snow fell pitilessly around. I was fortified, however, in the usual manner of a Livonian traveller; furred, and buttoned up from top to toe, the fur kept tight by crossed bands before and behind, the head covered by a cap kept down by woollen cloths, and the face swathed in so much wool and fur, that the nose, naturally the most projecting point, lay buried in the deep abyss.

Without the city, as within, all was dark and silent. My travelling companion and myself were the only wakeful beings far and wide.

We found the proud Marquis of Londonderry, with his wife, his son, and the tutor of the latter, fast asleep at the second station from Dorpat, where that thorough-going English Tory, a *rara avis* on these snowy plains, had taken up his quarters for the night on his return to England. The postmaster, as he smoked his pipe with us at breakfast, related to us how his lordship's first command, on entering the house, had been that during his stay there no one should smoke; he had also declared that no one of the attendant spirits, who might happen to be a smoker, should enter his room. The poor postmaster had, consequently, on the preceding

night, been obliged to foreswear smoking; but his yearning after a pipe had driven him early out of bed, that he might enjoy one by stealth in the public room. I asked whether the marquis had made any inquiries respecting the character of a country so new to him, and so replete with interest; whether he had conversed with any of the inhabitants. The postmaster said he had done neither; that the whole company had sat till seven o'clock, employed in the silent and devout consumption of their tea and toast; the ladies and children had then retired, but his lordship had continued to sit in silent solitude till twelve o'clock, when he went to bed. I had not the good fortune to meet the great man, for he was still in bed when we left the station.

The weather gradually cleared up in the course of the day; the gray mist dispersed, the sun broke through the clouds, and towards noon it was a fine clear winter's day, with eighteen degrees of cold. The travelling sledges here are, like the Russian sledges, very conveniently built. They are made of unpainted birch-wood; the roof is covered with mats, and lined with bright-coloured tapestry. The whole is light and elastic. The interior is stuffed with hay, straw, luggage, cushions, and pillows, amid which the traveller lies snugly and warmly imbedded. These equipages can be purchased for a few dollars; and when they are done with, they are immediately sold or else chopped up for firewood.

The most disagreeable obstacles on a snow-road here are the uneven hillocks and holes, where the snow has been piled up or has drifted away. The Russians call these irregularities "*Ukhabui*," and the Germans "*Grüfte*." The sledges dance about upon these eccentric roads like ships upon the waves, and many passengers become regularly seasick. These *Grüfte* are also often dangerous, as it sometimes happens that the horses and sledges stick fast, and they and the passengers are buried in the snow together.

The road to Narva passes the north-western point of the Peipus lake, and runs along its shore for some distance. It was now a wide desolate plain of snow, dazzlingly lighted by the midday sun. At great distances we observed little dark spots; they were the numerous Russian and Esthonian sledges crossing the lake in different directions.

We entered a Russian village of fishermen on the shore of the lake, and our eyes, long accustomed to the Esthonian huts, were agreeably refreshed by the neatness, order, and cleanliness that distinguished this Russian village. The houses stood all well arranged near one another, whereas those of the Esthonian villages are always scattered unsymmetrically around. Houses, walls, railings, gateways, were all firmly built of strong logs of fir, while the Esthonian houses are made only of decayed branches and bad straw. Many houses were two-storied and brightly painted. The Russian fishing villages round the Peipus lake are all similar to the one I have described, which is called the *Tshornaya Derevniya*.

I was at this time a novice in the management of Russian postilions, and would sometimes say entreatingly, "Pray, my good fellow, get on a little faster," or "Do be so good as to make haste." The postilion would stare, and not alter his pace in the slightest degree. My Russian companion, who understood the thing better, would exclaim in a thundering voice, "If you don't drive faster this moment, you rascal, I'll have you flogged like a dog at the next station, and tear your soul from your body." This had immediately the desired effect.



At the station of Rannapungern we resolved to dine, and opened our *Pudel* for the purpose. The article known by this name in the Baltic provinces, is a small bag or box given to every traveller by some careful hand, containing white bread, sausages, cheese, cold meat, wine, and other provisions, with which to supply the deficiencies of the ill-provided little country inns. No one travels in Livonia without being furnished by wife, mother, daughter, or sister, with a thick comfortable *Speise pudel*. Ours had been so richly filled, by a fair and friendly hand, with all the various substantial dainties of a Livonian kitchen, that my companion exclaimed, "Truly, if we had to share these bounties with five hungry Esthonian bears, we should have enough left." Just as he pronounced these words, the door opened, and behold there entered, one, two, three, four, five young bears, whining and howling most piteously.

"You see," said the postmaster, "I have brought you five hungry little visitors. They are all from the same mother, who was killed by a peasant in the forest yesterday."

The little beings whined and cried most piteously, and in a manner closely resembling that of young infants; I could never have believed what a striking affinity there was between the infant cry of a human being and that of a bear. The postmaster placed a basket, in which he had prepared a nest for them, in a corner of the room, and they all crept into it huddling together. Some snuffed the cold wall, sobbing, sighing, and whimpering, as if seeking the warm breast of their mother. All five had a grey-coloured, smeary, and not very fragrant fur, and a ring of snow-white hair round the neck. The postmaster told us this gray-furred race, with the white ring round the neck, was peculiar to this part of Livonia. It is the largest of all races of bears, but its skin is not so much prized as that of the brown or black bear.

Bears, like all wild animals, are much afraid of men; they scarcely ever attack them. Even to cattle bears are not as dangerous as wolves. It is very rare to find a horse or ox destroyed by bears. They do most mischief in corn-fields, beehives, and orchards. I made the acquaintance of the man who had murdered the mother of our five little visitors, and he related to us the circumstances of her death in the following manner:

"As I went into the forest to chop wood, a few days ago, I heard a noise in the bushes. I stepped softly over the snow, and saw a great she bear in her den with her young ones. She was licking her paws. I did not dare to attack her, for I had only my axe with me, but I took exact notice where she was, and went home to fetch my gun. I returned quite alone to the forest, for to confess the truth I was stingy, and didn't want to share the skin. When I came to the bear, I threw stones and snow-balls at her, to make her pay attention, and stand up, for it is easier to shoot them in that position. The bear looked round, growled, and reared herself up. I took aim, fired, and hit her on the right side; she fell down, and I put an end to her with my knife. As my gun was singled-barrelled, I should have been in a bad case if my shot had missed; the bear would have given me an ungentle embrace. One must never despair, however, even in the arms of a bear; for there is always the chance of stabbing the creature with a knife. I have killed many bears that way, but seldom in such cases without some loss of blood. A few years ago I lost several thick slices of flesh from my arm

and shoulders, and last year a bear took off my cap so clumsily, that the whole scalp went with it. But I stabbed her, clapped on my scalp again, and had myself cured." He showed me his head, which was scored all over with recent scars. It is a curious fact, that it is always the head of his opponent that the bear first attacks. An accident that happened in Livonia a ago, short time ago, confirms this. Two Russians from Novgorod, who were travelling with a dancing bear, got tipsy at a country inn one day, and in their drunken goodnature, gave the bear also a dram. As they continued their journey, the men got sleepy, and lying down on the ground, one of them tied the bear's chain round his waist. They both fell asleep. Upon the bear, however, drunkenness had a very different effect. He became unusually ferocious, and it was not long before he attacked and scalped one of his masters. A passing shepherd found him engaged in destroying and devouring his shrieking and struggling victim. It was with great difficulty that the shepherd contrived to save the other man, who had lain fast asleep the whole time.

The skin of the bear is sold to the Russian furdealers; the flesh is eaten by the peasants themselves, or else sold at Narva. The young ones are fed with milk and bread till they are about twelve months old, and they are then shot for their skins. This will probably be the fate of our five little acquaintances; unless, indeed, they should be bought by some keeper of dancing bears, and earn their bread by the exhibition of their accomplishments.

We drove along by the Peipus lake, from Kleinpungern to near Vaivara. The shores are here quite low, and on the edge of the lake enormous masses of ice have piled themselves together, forming a complete wall. As far as the eye could reach we saw the boundaries of the lake defined by this wall of ice. We spent the night at Vaivara, and beheld the Aurora Borealis, or Northern Light. It was followed the next day, as usual, by very cold weather, and a chill Siberian breeze. The wind, however, was favourable, and we scudded before it. This was no small advantage to people travelling in a sledge, and we reached Narva all the sooner.

#### NARVA.

Narva is the only interesting point between Dorpat and St. Petersburg. Though the town has only 5000 inhabitants, less than that of many Russian villages, yet many a large town might appear uninteresting and unattractive compared to the lively, compact little Narva. It is a thoroughly German town, with an old imperial constitution and similar privileges to those of Riga and Reval. Being on the boundary between Esthonia and Russia, Narva has been the scene of numberless sieges, bombardments, battles, and blockades.

As at Riga and Dorpat, a Russian incrustation has fastened upon the old German foundation of Narva. The Russians all dwell on the right-hand side of the river, round the ruins of their old Ivangorod, and the Germans on the left side of the Narova, within their walls.

The trade of Narva, since the foundation of St. Petersburg, has been insignificant enough. It scarcely occupies fifty ships; and a Narva patriot, who would boast of his city, must point back to olden times, when some

hundreds of ships were often anchored before it. Narva now trades chiefly with Pskoff, Dorpat, and Gdoff.

The far-famed waterfalls of the Narova lie about a verst above the town. One fine fresh winter's morning we had a delightful drive to them in an elegant fiacre-sledge, over an excellent snow-road. The Narova divides itself into two arms, each of which forms a separate waterfall, and they afterwards unite again. The island between the two arms of the river is 500 paces broad, and is adorned with pretty gardens, trees, and houses; so are the edges of the waterfalls themselves, with mills, manufactories, and fishing-huts, and the whole together must afford a very pretty spectacle in summer. The western waterfall, at a little distance from which a bridge leads to the island, is much the finest sight. More water falls in the easter arm, but it is not possible to get so close to it as to the western fall. The white shower of snowy spray, which is much admired in most waterfalls, produces but little effect (in winter at least) in those of the Narova, on account of the monotonous white snow-mantle under which every object is then concealed.

After gliding over the smooth snow-path along the side of the Narova, we re-entered the *Petersthor*, and passing out again as quickly at the *Wasserthor*, over the beautiful stone bridge built by the Emperor Alexander, we entered the land of the old Finnish Ingrians, now known as Ingermannland. As in Narva I leave the last of the German trading cities of the Baltic, it may be as well to cast a comparative glance over the commercial activity of these towns. The following table shows the trade of the German seaports of the Baltic in the year 1838, and their relation to the commerce of the whole Russian empire.

CITIES.	Value of exports in rubles.	Value of imports in rubles.	Total.
Riga . . . . .	46,000,000	12,000,000	58,000,000
Libau . . . . .	3,200,000	430,000	3,630,000
Pernau . . . . .	2,370,000	260,000	2,630,000
Reval . . . . .	830,000	1,530,000	2,360,000
Narva . . . . .	1,650,000	430,000	2,080,000
Windau . . . . .	420,000	80,000	500,000
Arensburg . . . . .	177,000	3,000	180,000
Hapsal . . . . .	15,000	32,600	47,000
Total of the German Baltic seaports of Russia . . . . .	55,000,000	19,000,000	74,000,000
Total Baltic seaports of Russia .	190,000,000	170,000,000	360,000,000
Total of the Russian empire . .	300,000,000	243,000,000	543,000,000

From this table it will be seen that the capital employed by the whole foreign trade of Russia, is to the capital employed by the German towns of the Baltic provinces as seven to one; that is, that the Baltic provinces include a seventh of the whole trade of Russia. The trade of Riga is to that of all the other towns put together, as nine to two; Riga is as thirty, Libau as two, Pernau as one and a half, Reval one, Narva one, Windau one-fourth, Arensburg one-eighth. The number of ships annually entering Riga is on an average 1300, at Libau 300, at Reval 100, at Pernau 100, at Narva sixty, at Windau twenty, and at Hapsal fifteen.



## FROM NARVA TO ST. PETERSBURG.

Ingermannland has always been far more Russian than any other province of the Baltic; and since Peter the Great's time, it has been so far *Russified* as scarcely to be German at all. Still it cannot be called thoroughly Russian, and forms a middle ground between the German provinces and the Russian neighbouring province of Novgorod, and as such it must be included in every complete account of the German provinces.

Narva even, which belongs to this province, though a thoroughly German town, shows many more Russian characteristics than the towns of the other provinces, and the moment we leave Narva on the Ingermannland side, we appear to enter another country. The villages by the roadside are all built in the Russian style, the inhabitants speak Russian, and wear long Russian beards. The very first inn after Narva is painted red and yellow, the favourite Russian colours. But the country is only Russian to this degree on the high road. In the forests and marshes of the interior live many of the old Ingrians, and the castles are inhabited by German or Swedish noblemen.

Near Narva we saw a large piece of forest that had been cleared, and the trees and branches were lying upon the ground. I was told that this was done to strengthen the ground. The wood would decay in five or six years, and would then be excellent manure. Manuring with decayed wood is practised in all the Baltic provinces; but nowhere are the noble trees wasted for this purpose, on so large a scale as in Ingermannland. In Courland, only the useless twigs and branches are used as manure.

As the cultivation grows much more imperfect, and the number of inhabitants much less, in Ingermannland, so the wild beasts become much more numerous and bold. We met several wolves almost immediately after leaving Narva. A little way before us on the road was another sledge, and the wolves continually crossed the road between the sledges, with astonishing boldness and *nonchalance*. The bears, though stronger, are much more shy than the wolves, who are every day persecuted with stones and sticks by the shepherds, and, therefore, if they do not grow courageous, become at least more impudent, and more indifferent to blows.

At a post-station in Ingermannland, for the first time we became acquainted with a specimen of that interesting class of men, Russian hackney-coachmen, in the person of one whom we hired, called Paul Ivanovitsh. He was a sharp smart young fellow of about twenty-five, and he served us not only as coachman, but as valet, musician, and watchman. In spite of the most freezing cold, he was always singing comic songs at the full pitch of his voice, on his windy seat, whilst we, warmly imbedded inside, had to stuff up our mouths with wool. At night when the sledge was put into a courtyard, he lay down upon our trunks as watchman, and was quite contented with a mat and some straw for a bed. He was always full of resources in time of need; and once, when we were in want of some cord to bind a box, he in a moment twisted together some straw from the sledge, and tied the box as firmly with it as if it had been nailed down.

We spent a night at Gurlova, a village midway between St. Petersburg

and Narva, and became for the first time acquainted with the splendours of a Russian inn. The house was painted red and yellow, and a gallery ran round the top outside. The courts behind the house had covered porticos supported by the trunks of fir-trees running round them. A corridor also passed round the house. Such are all Russian caravanserais. From the airiness and lightness of their architecture, the Russians might be supposed to be inhabitants of Africa. We were the only strangers in the inn, and for the sake of company, we made common cause with the people of the house, and shared the contents of our *speise pudel* with them. Among those who partook of its bounties, were two poor tailors, brothers, of the class who work for poor people in the suburbs of St. Petersburg. They had been journeying to Reval, to visit some relations, but unluckily, on their return, they had been robbed of all their little property to the last farthing, at an inn near Narva, and were obliged slowly to work their way from inn to inn by the wayside, in order to pay their journey back to St. Petersburg. They were natives of Yaroslav, and both very handsome young people, particularly the younger, a lad of fourteen. Both were serfs, and the younger, who worked under the superintendence of his brother, sent fifty rubles as a yearly tribute to his lord; the elder, seventy-five. They carried with them no other tools than their needles and scissors, every thing else they procured at the place where they worked; they were then making a pair of trousers for the host. I asked the younger whether his brother was severe, and whether he ever beat him.

"Oh, no, sir! I would not stand that!" answered he. "But sometimes I'm obliged to box his ears," remarked the elder brother, "when he reminds me too much of our mother and sisters, or is lazy at his work." The two handsome young tailors enjoyed the good gifts of our *pudel* extremely, and their conversation at supper was full of spirit and humour, as that of the low Russians usually is. Many anecdotes were related, and some interesting particulars of the country were told. Among other things, I heard that the Russians of this district always put into the graves of their deceased friends, a bottle of brandy and a ladder; the last intended for the soul to mount to heaven upon, the former to refresh it on the way. The brandy-bottles are very often stolen, but the thieves always leave the ladders. Of course it would be too cruel to rob the dead of the means of getting to heaven; besides, that is a privilege which the thieves probably envy them less than their brandy-bottles.

At four o'clock the next morning, the snow again crackled beneath our sledges. It is wonderful how light the nights are, upon these snowy plains, however cloudy may be the sky. There was no moon, no star or northern light was visible, and yet it was so light that we could see every thing distinctly for forty or fifty paces round us. We could easily distinguish the different branches of the trees.

The road was remarkably uneven, and we were incessantly dashed up and down by the thousands of *ukhabui* in the snow. Our coachman was unweariedly active and careful in his guidance of our equipage through all these obstacles. He now drove, now led the horses, singing all the time, and pointing out to us any thing worthy of attention on the road, springing out of the sledge to hold it whenever it threatened to upset, and sitting now on the left, now on the right, to preserve the equilibrium. In short, he was so active, that he made us quite ashamed of our own laziness.

The forests were magnificent, and the spectacle of the trees, bowed down beneath the weight of snowy crystals on every bough, was highly picturesque. The groups of Russians, too, working by the wayside, fine old men, and handsome healthy youths, all covered with snow like the trees, were worthy of the pencil of a painter. When we reached the inn at Glukhova we wished for some wine; so we broke our bottles, tossed out the wine on the table, and chopped it to pieces with a large knife. We then threw the bits into glasses, and poured hot water on them, for the fact was, every thing in our *speise pudel* was frozen. The wine, butter, sausages—all was as hard as stone, and every thing had to be restored to its natural state by aid of the stove.

At the inn of Glukhova, the life, bustle, and tumult announced the proximity of a large capital. In some of the rooms gentlemen were singing for the amusement of the ladies; they were German instrument-makers, returning to St. Petersburg after a visit to Riga. In another room, a whole party of noisy Russian coachmen and drivers were talking and quarrelling together. The Russian waiters and servants were running in and out, now serving one guest, now another, and now snatching up their balalaikas to divert themselves with a tune. In the midst of a group of noisy quarrelling fellows, sat an old man, singing, in aloud monotonous voice, some Russian church melodies, from a book which he told me was an extract from the Bible. In the courtyard, a Finlander was dancing and playing extraordinary melodies, on an instrument which I had never seen before. He called it a *dutka*. It resembled both in appearance and sound a clarionette, but the tones were less harmonious and more nasal; it was something between a clarionette and a bagpipe.

I was not a little surprised by the conduct of a distinguished young Russian, with whom I became acquainted here. I saw him smoking a cigar, and as I wished to smoke a pipe I asked him where he had lighted it. He pointed to the *obros*, the holy picture, before which a sacred light was always kept burning. I could not imagine that he had lighted his cigar at this lamp, and asked him to explain. He took my pipe, and lighted it immediately, while he laughingly remarked that it did not at all affect his conscience, and that he knew the difference between religion and superstition. Such follies, he said, were quite out of fashion among the young nobility. To confess the truth, thought I, the superstition of my poor rough coachman, who crosses himself every morning, and who never passes an *obros* without reverential obeisance, pleases me better than the fashionable *nonchalance* of this young sprig of nobility.

At Glukhova we had thoroughly entered Russia, and were so completely surrounded by Russian life that I must break off a narrative which would no longer bear reference to the German Baltic provinces, and devote the remainder of this part of my work to such descriptions and remarks on the country and its inhabitants, as may convey a more perfect picture to the mind of the reader.

#### NATURAL PHENOMENA OF THE BALTIC.

Travellers who mount their *kalesch* at Memel, and changing horses from station to station on the road to St. Petersburg, fly swiftly through Courland, Livonia, and Esthonia, judge very unfavourably of these provinces. They imagine themselves driving through a wilderness of alternate forest, marsh, and desert. Here and there they see a solitary and



uninviting house, lying alone in the frowning forest, and the inhabitants, muffled in their gray sheepskins, pass them without exciting interest. All the peculiar and interesting modes of life hidden in those forests, and moving within those houses, all the remarkable natural beauties of those woods and by-paths, are unknown to them; and as contempt is easier than investigation, they rejoice when, seated at a luxurious table in St. Petersburg, they can turn their backs finally on the Baltic provinces.

Flora and her associates have indeed been rather sparing in their gifts towards these countries. The landscape is always flat and low, and the vegetation somewhat monotonous. The inhabitants, too, take little pains to adorn the exterior, either of their persons or dwellings; but this country has, notwithstanding, charms and beauties of its own.

The country inhabited by the Lettes and Esthonians lies between the fifty-fifth and sixtieth degrees of north latitude. Their winter is six months long, and very cold and stormy. Their summer is short and hot. The autumn is dreary, rainy, and dirty; and a spring scarcely exists. Both the air and the soil of these countries have a great disposition to dampness. Whether on account of the marshy nature of the ground, or a predisposition of the air, it often drizzles for days and weeks together, without either clearing up or coming to a regular down-pour. Every thing seems to be mixed up together; even rain and snow often fall at the same time. The Germans have invented the expression "*Es schlackert*" for this chaotic sort of weather.

The climate of the Baltic provinces partakes both of Russia and of Northern Germany. In winter, when in Russia every road is hard, and the ice palaces firm in their foundations, there is here a continual alternation of rain and snow, and perpetual complaints are heard of the instability of the snow-roads. In the dark months of October and November, impenetrable clouds for ever conceal the sky, and night and day are scarcely distinguishable from each other.

The pleasantest peculiarities of the climate are the light summer nights, and the Aurora Borealis in winter. These, however, are only enjoyed by the solitary traveller, wandering through the illuminated summer forests, or by the Lettes and Esthonians singing through the short bright nights, or driving over the ice-covered lakes by the gleam of the Northern Light, to the weddings and festivities of their friends.

At certain seasons of the year, the whole surface of the country appears to be one vast marsh. Clear crystal brooks scarcely exist anywhere, and all the small rivers are marshy and dangerous. The aspect of a great Livonian marsh is dreary in the highest degree. Far and wide nothing is to be seen but a barren, desolate chaos, overgrown by moss and rushes. Here and there rise a solitary pine or stunted birch, and occasionally a lonely flower in the distance. All is a bare, wild, gloomy desert, inhabited by snipes and woodcocks, enlivened only by the monotonous cry of the lapwing hovering over her nest, or by the notes of the quail hiding in the wet grass.

Wherever the ground has sunk, and water collected over it, lakes have formed. They have little that is attractive in their appearance, but they nourish a multitude of ducks, wild geese, and swans. They very frequently contain floating islands. Pieces of the marshy soil detach themselves from the land, with all the trees, herbs, &c., that may be growing upon them, and the wind drives them backwards and forwards between

the opposite shores. The inhabitants fasten these islands now to one side, now to the other, according as they wish to graze their cattle.

Though the marshes, lakes, moors, and sandwastes render many parts useless for agriculture, yet the country is upon the whole fertile, and is particularly well adapted for rye, barley, and flax. The fertility decreases however the further northward we go; Courland is most fruitful, Esthonia least so, and Livonia occupies a middle rank. Livonia, however, is distinguished by a greater perfection of agricultural skill than Courland.

In spite of the immense consumption of wood which has been going on for centuries, in the ovens, distilleries, bathing-rooms, houses, and in the manuring of the Baltic provinces, the magnificence and extent of their pine and fir forests is unequalled.

Our foresters use a thousand precautions against what they consider injurious to forests. Mice, rabbits, squirrels, hares, stags, deer, heathcocks, and pigeons injure the trees, and are to be extirpated. Reeds, mosses, creepers, and rushes are not to be allowed because they deprive the trees of nourishment. The trees are to be protected against all wood-gnawing insects, against severe cold, which stops the growth of plants, and against extreme heat which injures their seeds. The trees are to be kept from hindering each other's growth by being too much crowded together, but are not to be too far apart, because they may then suffer still more from snow, ice, and hoar-frost. Marshy spots are never to be tolerated.

Now let us consider the condition of the forests of Livonia and Courland. Wild pigeons and heathcocks abound unmolested in the branches. Hares, elks, stags, and other enemies to the young tender trees live and die by multitudes undisturbed. The creeping clinging parasites hang round every old decaying branch, and the vigorous young trees can hardly penetrate through the moss, reeds, and rushes. Severe as is the cold in winter, the heat is extreme in summer. The snow sometimes lies so thickly on every twig as to bend the old and young branches together to the ground beneath the weight. Thousands of young saplings are often rendered cripples for life, and hundreds of venerable old trees are blighted by a single night of hoar-frost. The soil is everywhere marshy, and the evaporation of the morasses creates an intense cold, which blights the growth of multitudes of young trees.

To the inhabitants all this is a matter of course. In spite of all adverse circumstances there remain trees enough which rise victorious over cold, heat, and wet, and reach the most gigantic dimensions. The forests, which often occupy many square miles, afford peculiar enjoyments to the lover of natural beauty. For miles no trace of human life, no path, no distant sound of man or dog; all is the undisputed territory of the wolf, the bear, and the lynx. Here and there a gap in the primeval gloom shows green meadows, untrodden save by the stag and timid elk. The heathcock and the black eagle dwell concealed in the perpetual twilight of the pine-trees. In spring, when all is green and young and growing, and particularly in the clear, bright, enchanting nights of June, these forests are most beautiful. The fresh, delicious scent of the young buds of the pines fills the atmosphere with fragrance. At times light gusts of wind waft thick clouds of ripe seeds into the air, and multitudes of birds twitter in the lonely branches.

The most common trees are the fir, pine, birch, and alder. The birch

does not grow in the thick forests, but forms light and graceful groups on the meadows, and on the borders of the lakes. The birch flourishes the better the farther northward we go. The contrary is the case with the beech, oak, poplar, alder, and willow. No tree in the country is so systematically persecuted and rooted out as the oak. For, different from the pines, which prefer a sandy soil, and the birch-trees, which flourish best in damp ground, the oak always chooses the most beautiful and fertile spot; the oak must, therefore, always give way before the hand of agricultural industry, and the plough is its sworn foe.

Sixty different kinds of willows have been counted in these provinces, and they possess various kinds of alders, poplars, and asps. Yew-trees, lindens, hazel-trees, and other wild fruit-trees, are also common; and the trees are never more beautiful than in October, when, as in Canada and other northern countries, the changing and decaying foliage forms the most beautiful scale of colours—green, golden, purple, red, and violet.

#### THE ANIMAL WORLD IN THE BALTIC PROVINCES.

The animal world displays as many peculiar forms and circumstances as the vegetable creation in these countries. Many animals belong exclusively to them; many, which are common with us, are unknown here, or but rare and occasional visitors; while others, almost fabulous to us, are here familiar and common.

The wolf is the most common of all wild animals, particularly in Esthonia. It is so great a torment to the peasants and shepherds, that the month of December, when cold and hunger drives the wolves oftenest to the dwellings of man, is called by them "*Vilku mehes*," wolf's month. In January, the howling of the wolves is as common a nocturnal music as is the squalling of cats in our towns.

The bear, the brother of the wolf, has now quite abandoned the province of Courland; but in Livonia, and still more in Esthonia, he is still common. Many different kinds of bears are found. On the Peipus lake, and between Narva and Dorpat, the largest, strongest, and most dangerous species is met with. It is ash-gray, with a white stripe round the neck. Bear hunting and baiting are favourite amusements of the nobility. The Esthonians, too, encounter this savage animal with great equanimity, and very frequently bring bearskins and bear-flesh to market.

Lynxes are not so common as bears, and still rarer are beavers and squirrels. The fox is less abundant than with us. The wild hog is a frequent guest from Lithuania.

In all the larger forests, the gigantic elk of the north abounds; but the German nobles take such delight in hunting it, that it seems likely to disappear in some districts. Elks are most numerous in eastern Livonia, where twenty or thirty, and sometimes forty or fifty, are often killed in one day's hunting. The original inhabitants of the country behave more generously to this noble animal; and a female elk is often seen feeding, with her young ones, along with the shepherd and his flock. The elk has never been tamed, and all attempts to turn its gigantic strength to the service of man, have been unsuccessful. Its flesh, which is a very frequent dish here, has a taste between that of beef and venison. The skin



forms extremely hard and thick leather; it is in many places impenetrable to a musket-ball. An elk is seldom killed by the first or second shot; they sometimes even escape with four musket-bullets in the body.

Hares are common throughout the provinces, and deer are often found in Courland. Badgers and marmots burrow in the ground, and otters and beavers inhabit the banks of the rivers.

Among the birds, the most abundant are the heathcocks, which form large colonies in all the forests. Many sorts of eagles and falcons inhabit the highest tops of the fir-trees. There are ten different kinds of owls which frequent the Baltic provinces. The lakes are inhabited by numerous flocks of wild ducks and swans. Storks are said never to be met with beyond the Dwina. Turtle-doves, ring-doves, and wood-pigeons coo in the forests; all the different small singing-birds, as larks, linnets, titmice, thrushes, goldfinches, bullfinches, and nightingales, which are found in Germany, are also common here.

Of all kinds of animals, amphibious reptiles are the scarcest; yet the copper-snakes, which are very abundant, spoil many a pleasant walk. A great many kinds of fish are plentiful, particularly salmon, pike, and eels in the large rivers; carp, pike, tench, perch, and eels in the small streams and lakes: and turbot, sturgeon, haddocks, mackerel, herrings, and *Strömlinge* in the surrounding seas.

Insects are also very abundant. Though in winter all seems lifeless and forsaken, yet in summer every corner is full of flying, fluttering, creeping life. Innumerable swarms of little venomous moths, called *shnacken*, rise from the rivers and marshes, and sting with needlelike sharpness, tormenting alike man and beast. They are almost invisible from extreme minuteness, and fill the air like dust. Numberless hordes of ephemera and mayflies flutter over every piece of water; and copper-coloured, green, spotted, striped, and common water insects, and a thousand others, float in thick clouds over the damp meadows in summer.

Flies, wasps, and gadflies indemnify themselves in July for their enforced torpidity in April and May; and wild bees and ants are numerous in the forests. Every tree has its own peculiar worm; and these wood-worms have increased so of late years as to destroy whole forests.

#### THE BALTIC CERES.

For many centuries the corn of the Baltic provinces has travelled all over the world. Sweden, Holland, England, and many other countries, have fed from these plentiful granaries for ages. These abundant stores of corn, nourished by the toil of enslaved and unrewarded thousands, hastily ripened by the brief hot northern summer, and joyfully reaped and gathered in by the owners of both men and grain, have built the luxurious houses and formed the wealthy communities of Riga, Reval, Narva, and other cities, and connected the Baltic provinces with every part of the earth.

The whole country, with the exception of the land possessed by the great cities in their immediate neighbourhood, is divided into great and small estates, called "*Gebiete*." There are 2500 such divisions in Courland, Livonia, and Esthonia. As the country contains 1600 square miles, each estate extends, on an average, to two-thirds of a square mile, and 500

inhabitants. Many *gebiete*, however, contain ten, twenty, and even fifty square miles, with a population of 10,000; while others again fall far below the average.

The owners of these territories have always sought, as much as possible, to preserve the principle of unity and indivisibility. They never divide their estates, but leave them to the eldest son, and provide for the other sons and daughters in different ways. Neither are several estates ever united into one, for a lord who possesses more than one estate, always keeps each strictly apart, under a different administration.

The peasantry of one estate will differ strikingly in dress, manners, and customs from those of others. The serfs of every domain have much that is peculiar to themselves in the form and fashion of their harness, in the cut and colour of their coats and hats, and in their customs at weddings, festivals, &c. Even their moral characters are very various, so that the peasantry of one estate will be thievish, brutal, and deceitful, while those of another will be honest, civilized, and faithful.

The landowners keep the serfs of different estates strictly apart. They forbid and hinder, in every possible way, the intermarriages of serfs belonging to different domains.

The residence of the nobleman and his family, which is called the "Hof," is usually placed on a hill, or on the bank of a river. It consists of the principal dwelling-house, of houses for guests, of a building for the household, and of stables, greenhouses, mills, beer-houses, inns, distilleries, &c., often amounting to twenty or thirty different buildings, surrounded by gardens, parks, woods, and cornfields. The peasantry live at some distance from the "Hof," in the surrounding forests and marshes, divided into little communities, called in German "*Bauerhöfen*," and in Lettish "*Gesinde*." To each "*Gesinde*" small pieces of land are attached, which the peasants cultivate for their own profit. These pieces of land are again variously subdivided, the principal part belonging to the *Wirth* of the *Gesinde*. Every *Gesinde* must include in itself all that it requires; a piece of land for rye, another for barley, another for flax, a patch for sheep, and another for cattle-grazing, a piece of water, a piece of woodland, a garden, a beehive, and so on.

All domains are either private estates, crown-lands, church-lands, or town-lands. The crown-lands are generally let to German noblemen. The pastoral estates, or church-lands, resemble in every respect those of the nobility, having their own *Hof*, *Gesinde*, gardens, forests, meadows, &c. A pastor in the Baltic provinces is as much a landowner as his noble patron himself.

Rye is decidedly the principal production of the country, and attains greater perfection here than anywhere else. Wheat, barley, and oats are indeed cultivated; but it is upon their rye harvests that the provinces depend. The whole art of agriculture is very much simplified by this circumstance. The flax and hemp growing of Courland and Esthonia, is very unimportant; only enough for home consumption is grown. The far-famed flax of Riga comes chiefly from Livonia, Lithuania, and White Russia.

In no country is agriculture carried on upon so grand a scale as in the Baltic provinces. The cornfields of an estate generally lie all together, in one wide, far-spread mass of grain, and in many places a whole square verst will be found covered with rye. One forest often covers whole square

miles of ground. Wherever any work is to be done, a hundred hands are always ready to begin together. The peasantry are all more or less indolent and inactive, and therefore a dozen are required to do what with us would be the work of one. Many a simple rural occupation, insignificant enough in countries where so many small powers do not work together, becomes interesting here, by the mere bustle of the numbers employed.

When a house is building, it swarms like an ant-hill, with numbers of busy beings, old and young, men, women, and children. All hammer, paint, plaster, fetch, and carry, till the house is finished. When a new field is to be laid out, or a forest cleared, what bustle and confusion! Half the population of the estate, four or five hundred men, are called together. They rush into the woods with their axes, chopping, hacking, digging, and tearing away at the branches and roots, and long before it could be expected, the forest has vanished, the trees lie sawn to pieces and scattered in large heaps, and fifty ploughs draw their long furrows through the soft mould.

One of the most interesting works is the ploughing of a great field. All the peasantry come together from all corners, for three or four miles round, on the appointed day. Their agricultural instruments are small, light, and though apparently clumsy and barbarous, yet in reality well adapted to their purpose. The harrow, for instance, consists of young fir-trees bound together by cross boughs, in which the short thick twigs are left as teeth. None even of the best-constructed harrows serve them so well as this primitive contrivance. The ploughshare used all over the country—for a regular plough is unknown—is so small and light, that a man can easily carry it under his arm. It is, however, difficult to guide, as its principal support is in the hands of the ploughman, and the most unremitting diligence and attention are necessary to make the furrows lie even.

Every peasant has a piece of land measured out to him, which he must plough before night. As far as the eye can reach, the ground is then seen covered with ploughs, horses, and busy labourers. The beautiful golden seed then flies swiftly into the ground from the expert hands of the sower.

In this country the corn grows very fast, and to an enormous height; the heavy-laden ears droop like bunches of grapes on a vine. The green springing grain shows itself above the earth in May; in June it already stands in ear, and in the bright summer nights of July it falls beneath the scythe of the reaper. The harvest is reaped at night. This I was told was because the night-dews closed the ears, while in the daytime the dry grain falls out more easily. The charms of a long, light, merry harvest-night in the open cornfields, are very peculiar; the melancholy songs of the reapers and women, heard from far and near in every cornfield, mingled with the cries of the frogs, have a strange wild beauty of their own.

#### THE "TALKUS" AND "VAKKEN."

According to old custom, the harvest is always followed by a feast given to the whole population of the estate at the "*Hof*." The Esthonian call these harvest feasts the *Talkus*, the Lettes the *Vakken*. Danc-



ing and music—chiefly of the bagpipes and violin—are not wanting at them; and as the population of an estate generally amounts to some thousands of human beings, it may be imagined that the mere feeding of so large a party is a spectacle of some interest. Oxen are roasted whole; the cabbage and pea-soup, the mashed potatoes and porridge, are boiled in immense cauldrons; the herrings, apples, and cheeses are handed round to the peasants in huge heaped-up baskets. The feasters sit at long benches and tables, erected of fir and pine-wood in the courtyards. Brandy and beer flow in profusion, and high masts, decorated at the top with hoods, caps, ribbons, and handkerchiefs, are erected, that the young men may fetch down presents for their sweethearts and sisters. Swings and seesaws of different kinds are tossing incessantly up and down, and the fiddles and bagpipes, till long after midnight, accompany the incessant stamping of the merry dancers. The peasants very seldom miss the harvest feasts, and come miles and miles to attend them.

Their merriment, however, is still greater in midsummer, at the hay-harvest, and—which is perhaps extraordinary—in autumn, at the manuring season. The hay-harvest is one of their lightest and least oppressive labours, and falls at the season which has in this country been dedicated from remote ages to the goddess of Joy. The peasant girls at this season decorate themselves with garlands of grass and meadow-flowers; and with their rakes thrown over their shoulders, they go about singing together in troops, during the bright summer nights.

At the manuring season, however, the festive merriment of the Lettes reaches its highest pitch. Whether it be that the long toils of summer are closed by the manuring, or whether for any other reason, I know not, but certainly at this season the universal jollity and merriment surpass those of any other festival. According to old custom, this is the most approved season for making love, and marriage contracts are often concluded on the newly-manured field.

After the harvest begin the "*Rigenarbeiten*." The "*Rige*" is a building used partly for the threshing, and partly for the previous drying of grain. Whether the great dampness of the climate, or whether a peculiarity in the corn renders such an operation necessary, it has long been the custom in these countries, and in the neighbouring Russian and Lithuanian provinces, to dry corn by fire, previously to threshing it. The *Rigen* are usually very large, and built either near the "*Hof*" or in the middle of the fields. They consist of two wings, of which one is for threshing, and the other for drying. The latter contains a large oven, which raises the temperature of the air to forty, fifty, or sixty degrees of Réaumur. The corn is spread out on boards around it, and soon loses all dampness. Many advantages are gained by this process. The threshing is rendered easier, the corn is firmer, healthier, drier, more lasting, and less liable to worms.

The *Rigenarbeiten* of the Lettes and Esthonians are the most cheerful and peaceful of all agricultural labours. The work is very light, is carried on simultaneously by all ages and sexes, and promotes sociableness, on account of the narrow space in which it is carried on. The people are particularly inclined to be friendly and cheerful, now that the fine ripe grain, the precious and anxiously awaited result of the year's toil and labour, is at last safely reaped and gathered in. It is probably for this reason, that all the best and most popular songs of the peasantry are for

and of the *Rige* labours. It is extraordinary how attached to song and poetry the half-savage Lettes and Esthonians are. When the girls trip over the barnfloor, scattering the corn, or the men stand threshing it, or when the whole assemble after their work, sitting round the hearth by the light of the resinous pine-wood, which they use for torches, it is always song and poetry that lightens their toil and cheers their repose.

In winter half the population is employed in the transport of goods. In summer the forests, on account of their marshy character, are in great part inaccessible to man, but the winter makes firm roads everywhere. On this account all transports from one place to another, and all wood and forest labours, are put off till the winter. As the whole plan of labour, and all the agricultural arrangements in this country, are made with a view to a snowy and severe winter, it may be imagined what expense, trouble, and vexation is occasioned by a mild one. If there be not plenty of snow and ice, and if the weather be not very cold, the forests and roads remain marshy, the communication with the towns is cut off, the corn cannot be sold or exported without great cost and trouble, all building is at a stand-still for want of wood, and the breweries and distilleries are at a loss for ice.

If June is without rain, and the hay is used up, the cattle are sure to suffer from famine, for the shortness of the summer prevents a second hay harvest. If the spring is unfavourable, the barley crops fail, and potatoes, carrots, and other vegetables are very scarce, so that the poor peasants, whose barley-porridge is their chief or only means of subsistence, are sure to suffer much from hunger. The failure of rye, however, is more ruinous than all. From rye is derived the principal revenue of every estate, and its abundance can alone supply all deficiencies.

In countries where the different seasons glide mildly into one another, there are always a hundred resources and makeshifts to supply a particular scarcity. Nowhere, consequently, is the agriculturist tormented by so many anxious cares as in these countries, and nowhere does the population fluctuate so continually between plenty and want. In bad hay-years, the cattle die by numbers, and after bad corn harvests, the peasantry have to live entirely on the bread purchased at high prices by their lords.

The labours of the forest are the hardest and most oppressive of all. The quantity of wood consumed in these countries is almost inconceivable, partly because wood is used for the making of so many things for which we use iron, stone, and other materials, and partly on account of the wasteful profusion with which wood is employed.

The shoes of the peasants and the roofs of houses alone waste multitudes of trees, which die when the bark is stripped off them for these purposes. Enormous quantities of wood are burnt up in the stoves to warm the houses, the distilleries, and the *Rigen*. Upon one estate, of only three square miles, the yearly consumption of wood, for the lord and his family alone, amounted to 700 cubic fathoms. If this be taken as the average consumption, 400,000 cubic fathoms of wood are yearly burnt up in the houses of the nobility of the three provinces alone. As this quantity must at least be trebled, to include the wood used by the peasants and in the towns, every man, woman, or child, may be said to consume on an average a cubic fathom of wood yearly.

The transport of corn, like all other work, is performed in winter by large numbers, and like every other kind of labour, in the greatest haste.

When in December, after much autumnal change, the snow roads are at length firm, all the different populations of the estates lose no time in taking advantage of the ice, and all the paths and roads are seen filled by long processions of small sledges, each drawn by one horse, and laden with a few sacks of corn, hastening to the seaport towns. The corn scarcely travels faster on the sea than on these snow-roads; but sometimes a sudden run of mild weather stops them for a while. In vain the poor horses then struggle through the wet snow; the roads are seen covered with broken sledges, and the grain, which has often travelled fifty miles towards Riga, Libau, or Reval, is brought home again or left by the roadside. Such vexation, waste, and trouble, does the warm breath of the south occasion by an unseasonable visit.

The horses and oxen of the Baltic provinces are particularly small and mean looking. A meagre Livonian cow is the very picture of want and misery. The loads which the horses can carry are so lilliputian, and the milk given by the cows is so scanty, that it is only their great numbers which can supply their deficiencies. It is curious how universally applicable in this country is the observation, that small powers collected in great masses, accomplish every thing. Drop by drop the cask is filled, to yield afterwards abundance only to a few.

In many districts of Germany a few cows give milk enough to support a whole family; while in the Baltic provinces a peasant will often have a whole herd of horses, cows, sheep, and goats, and yet not enjoy plenty. In the same way, a nobleman who possesses perhaps some thousands of cows, oxen, and horses, will by no means revel in abundance.

The cow of this country is naturally of a poor race, and appears still more so, in consequence of its bad and scanty food. In very good years they are fed on hay, but otherwise must content themselves with straw and marsh-weeds. The frequent floods which occur in this rainy country, injure the grass and herbs, so as to cause epidemic diseases among the cattle.

The most interesting among the domestic animals is the horse. It is small in stature and strength, but it is admirable for its extraordinary powers of sustaining fatigue and hardship. The horses are certainly the best labourers in the Baltic provinces, and not only does the severest and hardest work in the country fall upon them, but they have also to bear the heaviest part of that yoke of slavery which weighs down its original inhabitants. The manner in which the Lettes treat their horses is one of the most unamiable points in their character. They revenge a hundred-fold upon the poor patient little creatures the wrongs that they themselves suffer: they take scarcely any care of them, and sometimes literally beat them to death. Yet these horses must perform not only the services customary with us, but many others besides. It is inconceivable with what energy, activity, and endurance the little animals have been gifted by nature. A bundle of dry straw seems to refresh them as much as an abundant meal of oats would a German horse. They scarcely ever seem to rest or sleep, night or day. They are often left in the open air when in a violent perspiration, unprotected against the bitterest cold, and yet they never seem the worse for it. This curious race of horses is spread, not only over Courland, Livonia, and Esthonia, but over Finland, Ingermannland, and part of Lithuania.

Backward as the art of agriculture certainly is in these countries, and backward as it must remain, while the present feudal constitution of society



lasts, yet it is undeniable that a new spirit is now active among the agricultural population, caused partly by an impulse from Germany, and partly by the very precarious condition of the present feudal institutions. The first step towards their abolition, the nominal emancipation of the serfs has already taken place, for the peasant may now, by law, leave his lord's estate for that of another. The second step, legalizing the right of a peasant to hold land and property, remains yet to be taken. Many of the nobles wish for the total abolition of feudalism, and some have even done away with slavery on their own estates, and are served by hired labourers.

The increase of refinement and luxury has increased the wants of the nobility, and narrowed their old sources of income. Increase of revenue has become, therefore, an object of attention; and in Livonia agricultural societies of landowners have been formed, after the pattern of those in Germany. Many books and pamphlets have been written upon the means of adapting foreign improvements to the circumstances and condition of this country. The young nobles, more than they ever did before, study the science of agriculture now at the German universities; agricultural books and journals are much read, and improvements in the management of land are the current subject of conversation. New threshing-machines are imported and invented; food and shelter are beginning to be prepared for cattle. The cattle of Holstein and Switzerland are imported to improve the domestic breed. Some enlightened landowners employ German veterinary surgeons, and German foresters. Notwithstanding all this, however, the reform progresses very slowly. From no branch of human industry is it so difficult to banish old prejudices and habits, as from the agricultural arts. They are generally followed exclusively by those most blindly ignorant and prejudiced. "Our fathers always did so—why should we do otherwise?" is the saying of the Lettish and Esthonian, as of every other peasant in the world.

#### ELEMENTS OF THE POPULATION.

The remote history of these countries is completely hidden from us modern sages, historians, and inquirers. Neither Tacitus, who tells us of the Heruli, the Goths, and the Veneti; nor Secretary Hyer, Pastor Watson, or Thunmann, who quarrel about what Tacitus tells us; nor *Heinrich der Lette*, nor the Historical Society of Riga, can give us any clear ideas concerning the early inhabitants of these countries, their condition, or their origin.

When the conquering and chronicle-writing Germans subdued and colonized this country, they found the aboriginal nations distributed in precisely the same manner as we now see them. The Lettes inhabited Courland and the southern part of Livonia; the Esthonians the northern half of Livonia and Esthonia. In primeval ages, the Lettes and Esthonians may have enjoyed political independence, but the races seem little adapted for forming regular political communities; and accordingly, as early as we have any record, we find them living in greater or less dependance on neighbouring nations.

The land was successively overrun by Russian, Polish, Swedish, Danish, and German tribes; but of all these different conquests, none was of so much importance to the destinies of the country as that of the Germans.

They did not direct their efforts merely at the political supremacy, hut at the actual possession of the country; and they associated armed priests, merchants, and mechanics, with their soldiers in the task of conquest, who forced their language, their arts, and their religion, upon the conquered nations, at the same time that they despoiled them of their rights.

Of all *modern* conquests of these countries, however, the Russian has been the most important, and is to us of the greater interest, on account of its influence over the present and the future. The provinces, as we see them at present, are inhabited by Esthonians, Lettes, Lives, Koors, Swedes, Jews, Poles, Germans, and Russians. We will endeavour to describe the different geographical, and afterwards the social relations of these various races, beginning with the original inhabitants.

The peninsula of Courland, and the country round the mouth of the Dwina, and that bordering on the Aa, are the districts inhabited by the Lettes. A line drawn through Livonia from the south point of the Peipus lake, through Verro and Valk to the gulf of Riga, would be about the boundary between the two races. The Esthonians occupy the whole of Esthonia, the Oesel Archipelago, and the northern part of Livonia. Always more bold and manly than the Lettes, they were, and still are, far more enterprising at sea. They have, therefore, not only taken away from them the islands in the neighbouring seas, but have also driven them back from their own coasts into the interior, and they inhabit the shores of the gulf of Riga, which belongs entirely to the country of the Lettes.

It is likely that both nations, as long as they remained politically independent, had different social ranks and classes among themselves. They had their elders and political heads; they had a priestly order of their own. They had also doubtless their good and bad, their illustrious and despised families; for even now, sunk in universal degradation, they pride themselves on ancestral distinctions. The contempt with which the steel-clad Germans, bold, enterprising, refined, and civilized Christians, sprung from a powerful and far-famed nation, regarded the poor, timid, and barbarous race of pagan shepherds, must have been from the first very great. When the Esthonians and Lettes were reduced to complete slavery, it became such that the Whites of America could scarcely regard with more horror the contamination of black blood, than the Germans of Livonia would that of the Lettes and Esthonians.

The German nobles have always endeavoured to prevent these enslaved nations from occupying themselves in any way not connected with agriculture; but many among them have gradually crept into other classes of society, and procured themselves freedom, refinement, and a German surname. Not only have many landowners taken particular peasants into their houses, and qualified them, by instruction, for the trades of carpenters, masons, &c.,—not to speak of those domesticated as male and female servants—but many serfs having obtained their freedom glide into the different towns, become mechanics and shopkeepers, and very soon acquired German cultivation and manners. It is extraordinary, indeed, with what ease and rapidity the pliable Esthonians and Lettes *Germanize* themselves. In a very short time they become, in language, manner, and appearance, such thorough Germans, that it would be very difficult to know them. Riga, Mitau, Reval, and Dorpat, contain many such half-Germans. Very often they appropriate a German

surname, or that of the particular *Gesinde* or *Bauerhof*, from which they came. This, however, can only be done with the permission of their masters. Many who are unable to obtain this permission, and who yet thirst for a real good German name, choose one privately, such as *Rosencrantz* for instance, ticket all their property "*Yane Rosencrantz*," sign their letters accordingly, and privately acquaint all their friends and relations that they wish to be called *Rosencrantz*, so as to be ready publicly to adopt the wished-for name, whenever they can obtain permission. After a few generations, all trace of Lettish or Esthonian origin in these half-German families generally disappears.

If we ascend the ladder of social importance, we find these half-Germans succeeded by the so-called "*Klein deutschen*." Under this name are classed German mechanics, innkeepers, stewards, foresters, &c. As the Lettes and Esthonians have always adhered to their primitive modes of industry, the nobility of the country and the merchants of the towns have been obliged to obtain masons, carpenters, stewards, &c., from Germany. These *Klein deutschen* are certainly the most displeasing and disagreeable class of society in these countries. They look down on the Lettes, with even more contempt, and are yet more proud of their German blood, than the proudest barons in the land. Among these *Klein deutschen*, moreover, will often be found the greatest vagabonds in the country, and not having the dependance of serfdom to fall back upon, they often sink into a more abject state of poverty than any other class in the country. They are seen at times begging their bread from those very natives for whom they profess so much contempt, and from whom in return they receive the ignominious denomination of *Hungerleider* (sufferers from hunger), a nickname, by the by, which the Lette is very apt to apply to the German race generally.

Above the *Klein deutschen* stand the *deutschen Bürger*, including the merchants, shopkeepers, artists, and principal mechanics. They occupy the same rank as that of the burghers in our German towns; but as in talent and industry they are below them, so in outward polish and refinement, they are certainly above them. The tendency to hospitality and social enjoyment is universal in the north, and makes the inhabitants more polite and refined, but at the same time less useful and industrious.

In earlier times, Livonia was a sort of Paradise for emigrating Germans. Every one freely followed whatever trade or profession he pleased, unrestrained in any way. Taxes and imposts did not exist, and forced levies of recruits were things unknown.

The Russian conquest altered all this. The different ranks of society were divided into two classes; firstly, those who paid taxes, and were liable to be taken as recruits; and secondly, those whose privileges exempted them from both. The first are called *Okladisten*, the second *Exempten*. All the classes of society yet spoken of, the serfs, the *Halbdeutschen*, the *Klein deutschen*, and the *deutschen Bürger*, belong to the *Okladisten*, that is, whenever they are naturalized, for as foreigners they remain exempt, though of course, at the same time, debarred from many rights appertaining to naturalized subjects. As all *Okladisten* are liable for certain offences to be punished by public flogging, all wealthy people try in some way or other to escape from this class, by obtaining either a diploma of nobility, or some office conferring the desired privileges. The aristocracy, or *Exempten*, are again divided into *Literaten* and *Adel*. All clergymen



and pastors, together with the physicians, lawyers, and professors, form the *Literaten*, as distinguished from the great landowners, or *Adel*. All the *Literaten* are Germans. The pastors have generally been tutors who emigrated from Germany. At the very head of society, stand the formerly "*wohlgeborenen*," "*hochgeborenen*," "*hochwohlgeborenen*," "*wohledlen*," "*mannhaften*," and "*gestrengen*," "*Herren vom Adel*."

The nobility of the different provinces are divided into four bodies or knightly colleges, those of Livonia, Esthonia, and Courland, and fourthly that of the Oesel islands, comprehending all the nobility of the Oesel Archipelago. No one can become a nobleman in the Baltic provinces, except he be chosen by one of these colleges. They have the right of refusing admission into their body even to Russian princes. Animated by the haughtiest *esprit de corps*, the nobles have often withheld the "*Indigenat*" from illustrious and distinguished men; although, on the other hand, rich merchants and lawyers who happened to have powerful friends among the "*Adel*," have often been received into their body. In the Swedish time many Swedish families, as those of Wrangel, Löwis, and Igelström, were incorporated; and since the Russian conquest, several Russian grandees have been admitted. Almost every German country, Bavaria, Westphalia, Swabia, Saxony, Switzerland, &c., have their representatives among the nobility here; though most of the races came originally from Westphalia and Lower Saxony.

Not only socially but geographically are the divisions of the population in these provinces very strongly marked. The inhabitants of Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland, have indeed, in language and manners, much in common, much that is characteristic of the German Baltic provinces of Russia; but a more practised eye will discover much that is characteristic only of particular parts. The Livonian German is as different from the German of Courland, as the Saxon is from the Prussian, and the Bavarian from the Austrian, and they despise one another quite as intensely. Upon the whole the Livonian is considered as the most refined and cultivated, the Esthonian as the best soldier, and the Courlander as possessed of most natural ability. Even within each province, differences may be observed between the inhabitants of different parts; and a practised eye and ear, for instance, can readily discover whether a German of Courland comes from the neighbourhood of Libau or Mitau.

In comparison with the Germans, Lettes, and Esthonians, the other elements of the population, the Swedes, Poles, Jews, Gipsies, and Russians, are very insignificant. Of these, of course, the Russians are by far the most important. A few small islands, Wrangelsholm, Nargen, Worms, Runoe, &c., are inhabited by a race of Swedish origin, who preserve much of their original Swedish character. The nobility of Swedish origin have however become thoroughly *Germanized*.

The Poles are found occasionally in the towns, but they are few and scattered, and are completely lost among the rest of the population.

The gipsies wander homeless through Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland, as through other countries, and continue their old nomadic way of life, in spite of the severest laws against them. They are less numerous in Livonia than in Courland. They employ themselves much in the same way as in other countries, namely, as horse-stealers, cattle-dealers, tinkers, &c. They are in many cases still permitted to remain under the command of their own chiefs or gipsy kings, because they pay more respect

to them than to any other authorities, and because these chiefs can be made responsible for the offences of their subjects. For instance, if a gipsy king is threatened with punishment for the thefts of his people, the offender is soon discovered.

The Jews are seldom to be met with anywhere but in Courland, for in Livonia and Esthonia a Jew is actually prohibited from remaining more than twenty-four hours in any town or city. In Courland, however, they are found everywhere, in the towns, villages, and *Edelhöfen*, where they occupy themselves in agriculture, and in different mechanical arts, as smiths, carpenters, masons, &c. In the towns they are also tailors, tinkers, glaziers, shoemakers, brokers, and shopkeepers; but the hackney-coachmen in the towns, and the innkeepers and brandy-dealers in the country, are almost exclusively Jews. They practise a variety of cunning and artful tricks in dealing out their brandy to the peasants, and induce them to drink by taking credit, receiving various little goods and chattels in payment for their spirits, and so on. In this way they often completely ruin the poor Lettes and Esthonians.

More than a third of the beggars and mendicants of Courland are Jews, and the depth of want and misery into which these Jewish beggars are sunk, is fearful to contemplate. As smugglers, the Jews on the frontiers of Courland and Lithuania, are so expert, as often to defy the most rigorous precautions of the Russian government.

The old ordinances of the dukes of Courland against this unfortunate race, are ridiculous enough, and aim at nothing less than the immediate and total annihilation of Judaism in the country. They are generally entitled "Ordinances for the total abolition of the Jews," and some of them commence thus: "It is our earnest will and pleasure, that in six weeks no Jew shall anywhere remain within our dukedom." How little the Jews troubled themselves about the ducal will and pleasure, is proved by the fact, that instead of six weeks, one hundred years have passed without even decreasing their numbers. Another ducal edict commands: "that all Jews caught in the streets, shall have their horse and cart and all their property taken from them, shall be severely flogged, and then ignominiously expelled from the town." It is also added that all persons receiving, sheltering, or succouring Jews, "shall be punished in the most exemplary manner."

These edicts, though they doubtless banished many Jews from the country, had no lasting effects, for all the gaps were soon filled again. The Russian government, though it has not attempted total abolition, or banishment in six weeks, has yet attempted to curb, restrain, and put down the poor Jews in various ways. At one time all Jews were to be cajoled or forced to confine themselves to agriculture; at another time all Jews without property were to be transported to Siberia, where government would provide them with property. The last attack was made in 1840. All poor Jews were to be collected, and brought together out of every town, by their respective *Rathsherrn*, to Mitau. There the Rabbins assembled them, and set forth to them the condescending grace of their emperor, whose wish it was that they should henceforth be employed in agriculture—an occupation so much to be preferred to all others, and so peculiarly adapted for preserving men in the paths of morals and religion. "Endowed with rich presents by the charitable citizens of Mitau," we are told, "and full of gratitude to their generous benefactors, the

emigrants set forth, followed by the tears and prayers of the compassionate." The Rabbins no doubt endeavoured to persuade the poor creatures that they were going to a land of promise, but unfortunately the province of Kherson, their destination, has a very different character.

The emigrants were very numerous; they amounted to 2530 souls; 1314 males, and 1216 females; in all 341 families.

The Russians of the Baltic provinces may be divided into those who only wander for a time about the country, and those who are completely domesticated. The Russian serfs easily obtain permission of their lords to wander out into the world and seek their fortunes, provided they pay a certain yearly sum as *obrok*. Quick and shrewd in every thing, though they never do any thing thoroughly well, they are very useful in provinces like those of the Baltic, where industrious and intelligent workmen are scarce, and where they supply the deficiencies of the indolent and unskilful natives. The strong, lively, active serf of Russia will perform three times as much work in a given time as a Lette or Esthonian. In all labours which require skill and expedition, such as the laying out of a garden, the building of a house, &c., the German noblemen will rather employ Russian workmen than their own serfs. They are particularly expert as carpenters, and make a good deal of money wandering from estate to estate with their tools slung at their girdles.

The Russians have a greater genius and predilection for the trade of pedler and itinerant merchant, than for any mechanical art. They travel about the country in little one-horse carts, vending Russian books, pictures, and fancy wares, as well as earthenware, tobacco, &c. But the Russians of these provinces do not confine themselves to mechanical pursuits; they often engage in speculations of various kinds. In spring they will buy up the future produce of the gardens from the lords of the soil, to sell the fruit afterwards by retail in St. Petersburg. Sometimes they form companies, and undertake for certain sums the erection of bridges, public buildings, &c. Sometimes they hire large pieces of land in the neighbourhood of towns, where they grow vegetables for the use of the citizens. A Russian who yesterday entered the service of a merchant to pack hemp and flax in the harbour, will to-day turn coachman to a nobleman who wishes to cut a figure, with a fine, handsome, long-bearded Russian on his coachbox, and to-morrow will return home with what he has earned. The Russians domesticated in the provinces either live in the villages as peasants, or in the suburbs of the towns as citizens. The former chiefly employ themselves in fishing. The Russians are the most expert fishermen in the world on rivers, and their nets generally sweep the pond or stream into which they are thrown, completely clear of all living creatures; so much so, indeed, that when ponds are hired for a certain time, a stipulation will often be made by their owners that no Russians shall fish in them.

The Russians who inhabit the suburbs of the towns are almost without exception of low origin, but many of them have in some way managed to free themselves from slavery, and some have raised themselves to considerable rank and wealth, particularly those who trade between Riga, Reval, &c., and the interior of Russia, in wood, flax, hemp, tallow, &c. They inhabit the daily spreading and rising suburbs, demanding, with ever increasing loudness and impatience, an equality of rights with the German burghers within the cities.



The vegetable gardeners in the environs of the towns are exclusively Russians; they spread themselves all round the cities with their cabbage and asparagus gardens. None know better than they do how to turn every warm ray of sunshine to the advantage of their plants, and how to protect them from the severity of the northern climate. The Russians are also frequently masons, carpenters, smiths, &c., in the great cities.

If we cast a summary glance over the whole population of the Baltic provinces we find:

The original inhabitants, the Lettes and Esthonians, are agricultural labourers, with a very few exceptions.

The Germans are the aristocracy of the country, and consist of the nobility, living on their own estates, of the merchants and tradesmen in the towns, and of the *Literaten*.

The most rising and industrious class are the Russian settlers and travelling mechanics and tradesmen. The Jews are scattered through the provinces as innkeepers, small shopkeepers, and beggars, and the gipsies as thieves and horse-dealers.

The whole population of the Baltic provinces is about a million and a half, and the population decreases in density towards the north. Of 1000 inhabitants about 900 are Lettes and Esthonians, fifty Germans, thirty Russians, five Swedes, and fifteen Jews.

#### THE LETTES—THEIR ORIGIN.

The regular strata, the pointed rocks, the chains of mountains, the deep valleys and chasms on the surface of the earth, point out clearly enough to the geologist the mighty revolutions and changes that have taken place on that surface; but to point out *how* and *whence* they came is beyond him. It is the same with the historian. He knows that revolutions have taken place—that some races have branched off in different directions, and that others have merged into one another—that powerful repelling and attracting principles have agitated masses that have since become compact; but how these compact masses arose, and why they formed and kept together, are questions to which he is unable to return any reply.

The interesting but almost unnoticed races of the Lettes and Lithuanians are a perpetual and puzzling enigma. Lonely and unconnected with any of the surrounding nations, they occupy their little nook of northern land, evidently unsimilar and unrelated to any European nation, and bear affinity only to the tribes that inhabit the far East, at the foot of Dawalagiri, or on the shores of the Ganges.

"*Esmi*," I am—says the Lithuanian: "*Asmi*," I am—says the Hindoo of the Himalayas. "*Eimi*," I go—says the Lette of the Baltic: "*Aimi*" is the Indian word for expressing the same idea. On the Niemen, *Divas* is the word for God; on the Ganges, *Daivas* signifies the same. It is unnecessary to know more Sanscrit than can be learned from Ruckert's poems, to be struck by the extraordinary Indian character of the pronunciation, language, and tones of the Lithuanian and Lette. The languages are the same in form; the pronouns, adverbs, and numerals are similar; the names of the commonest animals, of the different parts of the human body, &c., are the same in the Sanscrit as in the Lithuanian. Indeed whole Sanscrit sentences may easily be put together, which the

peasant of the Niemen will at once understand. From these and many other proofs there can hardly remain a doubt that the Lithuanians and Lettes must have come more directly from the primeval birthplace of the human race than any other European nation.

But what extraordinary force or necessity has transplanted thus far into the west, this fragment of the original stem? Why did this tribe wander two thousand miles away from its birthplace? Why has it remained thus changelessly fixed in its narrow little nook of land, while all the nations round were incessantly changing and advancing? Where, in the land of the Himalaya, lies the Indian home, whence this pastoral people wandered, or were driven forth? Does any part of them still remain there? These questions are for us involved in impenetrable darkness.

The oldest historians of these tribes of the Baltic describe them as governed by a supreme High Priest, called the "*Krihvo*," and by subordinate priests the "*Veideloten*." Groves of oak and other trees are named as the residences of these priests, and the temples of the deities they worshipped. This caste of priests was probably of Hindoo origin and character, and lasted until Christendom and its popes expelled the heathenism of the north. The Prussians in the south, and the Lettes in the north, were then both subjected by foreigners, but the fragment that remained of the original race, and still preserved its independence, seemed to strengthen in the struggle with the Christian Russians from the north, and the German knights from the south. The courage and military skill which they had gained during their wars with the Teutonic chivalry, they turned against their Russian neighbours in the 13th and 14th centuries. Lithuanian armies penetrated to the shores of the Dnieper and the Black Sea. In the 15th century they became so powerful by the marriage of their chief Yagello with the Polish princess Hedwig, that the German order were forced to yield, and for 200 years all the Lithuanian races were united under one Polish head. When Poland began to decline, in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Lithuanian part of her empire was the first to be torn from her. It was conquered first by Prussia, and ultimately by Russia, under whom are again united all the Lettish and Lithuanian races, with the exception of the very small portion which belongs to Prussia.

There are four great periods in the history of the Lettes:

1. Their dark primeval history down to their settlement in Europe.
2. Their early European period of independence under their priests.
3. The time of Lithuanian and Polish greatness.
4. Their period of utter degradation and slavery under Russian and German masters.

The country bordering on the Niemen, and on its various tributary rivers, is inhabited by Lithuanians. The country round the mouth of the Dwina, the whole of Courland, and the southern half of Livonia, is inhabited by Lettes. The difference between these two branches of the same race is evidently of very long standing, and dates back perhaps to a period antecedent to their settlement in Europe. They have both the same national character, the same domestic arrangements, the same costume, and, for the most part, similar manners and customs. Both nations manifest but little energy, strength, and resolution; but, notwithstanding there is so much that they have in common, there are still many distinctions. The Lettes have never shown the greatness and strength, nor shared the glory of the Lithuanians, in their palmy days. They are of a softer, gentler, more

timid and yielding nature than the latter. They have never been able to defend themselves in war, and for many hundred years have been a peaceable, harmless nation of herdsmen; but they are also more humane and civilized than their sterner and stronger brethren; and the Lettish peasant of the present day entertains no small contempt for the Lithuanian.

## LETTISH MYTHOLOGY.

Without attempting to furnish a full and complete description of the mythology of the Lettes, it may be worth while to dwell upon those superstitions and practices, which still to this day retain their influence, and upon those which are most peculiar and characteristic of the people.

It would be as great a calumny to describe the old pagan Lettes as sunk in a gloomy or degrading idolatry, as it would be gross flattery to represent their descendants as pure and enlightened Christians. The ancient Lettes adored one Omnipotent and All-seeing Spirit, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, "*Deevas*," of whom they made no visible representation, and whom they worshipped as the supreme deity. Hosts of subordinate deities and spirits were indeed believed in, but it is doubtful whether they were ever worshipped in a very distinct manner. A nation so devoted to art as the Greeks, naturally enough clothed its spiritual conceptions of the Deity in the forms of material beauty, and then worshipped the image they had moulded. The Lettes, in whom, as in other northern nations, this plastic tendency was wanting, preserved with greater purity the idea of the spirituality of superior beings. They did not imagine their deities to dwell in their temples, but rather to inhabit the heavens, and the air, or the hidden depths of the earth and ocean.

The Lettes, who, like all nations, fashioned their heaven according to their earthly experience, imagined their supreme deity, *Deevas*, as an old but vigorous man,—powerful and wealthy, and the father of a large family. He was married—had sons and daughters, untiring horses and cattle, and granaries always full of corn. They generally spoke of him as "the Old Father." All their gods they called "*father*," and all their goddesses "*mother*." There was the Father of the Sea, and the Father of the Fire, the Earth-mother, the Forest-mother, the Mother of the Flowers, the Mother of the Winds, &c. The youths and maidens and children of the Greek mythology were unknown to them. They pictured all their deities as parents.

After "the Old Father," the most powerful gods were *Perkuhnos*, *Trimpus*, and *Pikulis*, the Thundergod, the Watergod, and the Earthgod. *Perkuhnos* was very little inferior in rank to the Old Father himself. At Romove, in Prussia, stood the most celebrated temple of *Perkuhnos*, the Thundergod. The image of the deity was set up under an immense oak-tree, which was held in such veneration by the people, that whoever carried a branch of this tree about with him, was supposed to be secure from all diseases and other evils. At this temple the priests kept up a perpetual fire, which was not to be let out under pain of death. White horses were sacrificed to *Perkuhnos*, and sometimes even prisoners of war.

The wife of the Thundergod was the Mother of the Sun. Every night she was said to refresh the sun, tired and dusty, from her long journey, by conducting her to the bath; and the next morning, when the sun was thoroughly cleaned, refreshed, and rested, she continued her journey.



The goddess of Joy, Ligho, whose feast is still celebrated at Midsummer, has been spoken of in a former chapter. Swinging is a very favourite amusement with the Lettes at this period, and it is a current superstition that the higher the swings fly at the feast of Ligho, the higher will grow the flax in the fields. On this day the young girls go into the meadows to pluck the roots of the five-leaved grass. These roots when young are white and tender, and their five sprouts have a great resemblance to a human hand, but the old roots, of which many always remain in the ground, are black, withered, and shrivelled. The maiden who plucks one of the latter, will, it is believed, either never be married, or else have a very old husband; whereas the young roots ensure a young and handsome one.

*Laima*, the goddess of Fate, is another notable deity. She spun for every child at its birth, a web, in which were interwoven the threads of good and evil fortune, of which its life was to be composed. The belief in this goddess was never quite expelled by Christianity, and the Lettes still sing of the "*Fate-mother Laima*."

The Sun was not in the mythology of the north a god, but a goddess. She was married to the Moon, and from this union sprung the Stars, —the daughters of the Sun. They married the sons of *Deevas*, and each received at her wedding but a small marriage-portion of Light, while the children and grandchildren of these marriages, the smaller and smallest stars, were still more scantily provided. The Lettes could not have imagined the Sun and Moon very powerful deities, as they were often overpowered for a time by witches, demons, &c., which occasioned eclipses of the sun and moon, during whose duration the Lettes were always very much troubled and dismayed. Sometimes, it was said, the moon had much to suffer from his jealous partner, on account of the flirtations which he carried on every night with the pretty young stars. The sun, to punish these infidelities, would occasionally chop her husband all to pieces, till he promised better behaviour; and in this way it was that the Lettes accounted for the mutilated shape in which the moon sometimes appeared in the heavens.

If Christianity has not eradicated this old heathen mythology, still less has it done away with the belief in multitudes of goblins, household spirits, fairies, witches, and other supernatural beings. *Prehkina* is a little old fairy who presides over rats, mice, toads, house-snakes, and other domestic reptiles; *Dehkla* is a benevolent little spirit, and watches over sleeping infants; *Uhfinsh* (yellow breeches), is supposed to exercise particular authority over the bees; and *Mahyas Kungs* and *Mehslu Bahba*, are household deities, who bring good and evil into every house; on the latter in particular the blame is laid when the house is more than usual untidy. The Lettes have days on which they sacrifice to these spirits, by setting out food for them in their gardens or houses, or under old oak-trees.

#### NATIONAL CHARACTER OF THE LETTES.

There are few nations in Europe whose history is so entirely without brilliant periods and striking characters, and so entirely stationary and monotonous as that of the Lettes. Although the love of freedom and independence must certainly exist to a certain degree in their character, because it is a natural and inextinguishable principle in human nature,

yet they appear totally wanting in the energy, resolution, and courage, necessary to attain and preserve so inestimable a treasure. The social principle, the tendency to associate, and cling together, is remarkably weak in them. They have never even formed a village, much less a city or a state. In some nations all forces seem to have been so divided, arranged, and united, as was best calculated to forward the great work of society. The Lettes seem to have acted on the opposite principle, of splitting and dividing every force, to the total prevention of social greatness.

Since the earliest period of which we have any record, every Lette has always brewed his own beer, and built his own house, and every family has always made its own clothes; there was therefore no occasion and no opportunity for tailors, masons, brewers, and other tradesmen to spring up. Every household has always kept a great deal to itself, without associating much with others; and this has prevented the rise of great and powerful families. Society remained anarchical because every man desired to remain independent and isolated on his own bit of land. It is probably on account of this repelling and unsocial spirit, that a race, gifted with so many talents and so much natural intelligence, should have remained for hundreds of years so thoroughly insignificant and useless. Scarcely a nation can be named who would not appear bold, spirited, and energetic, compared to the Lettes. They are soft-hearted, timid, and fearful, child-like and childish, quiet and resigned to good and evil fortune, and all these good and bad qualities unfit them for any thing but servitude and dependence.\* The spirit of trade and speculation is as deficient in the Lette as it is conspicuous in the Russian. They never wander from place to place, but cling like plants to the little spot of land to which they belong, bitter as is often their lot in the land of their fathers. The poetical and dreamy tendency of their minds tends to unfit them for active independent life. Lost in the fictitious joy or sorrow of their poetry, they as easily forget their duties and wants, as they do their hardships and misfortunes.

Truly it is with a heavy heart and with most fervent and grieving pity, that the humane observer must contemplate these poor dumb tribes of the

\*Their want of bold rough energy is evident to a spectator in the commonest occurrences of life. Among the English, Germans, and other nations, the common people very soon fly from words to blows when they quarrel. Not so with the Lettes; they will sit opposite one another for hours, dealing out upon one another, in turns, every term of abuse they can think of. A friend told me of a quarrel which he had once seen between two Lettes, which afforded a good illustration of this. They sat opposite one another in a little public-house, with a broken pipe lying between them, which was the cause of the dispute. They began with sarcastic remarks and questions, and then proceeded to regular abuse. "You thief!" "So I'm a thief, am I? What have I stolen, pray, you rascal?" "I a rascal, you lying vagabond?" and so on for some time. At length they came to action. One took hold of the other's neckhandkerchief, and began drawing it tightly together, and pulling it about. For some time the other seemed contented with this treatment, but at last lie also took hold of the other's handkerchief in the same manner. For a little while they continued pulling one another's handkerchiefs about in this manner, till one cried out to the other, "What for do you throttle me? Let go!" "No, you must let go first—you're throttling me!" "If you'll let go I'll let go!" One then let go a little, and then the other exactly as much, the first then released his hold, and the second did the same; but this was not all. The one immediately spit in his opponent's face, crying, "Take that, you vulgar fellow!" The other quietly wiped his face, and returned the compliment. The combat was now ended, both got into their sledges, and drove off in opposite directions, shouting to one another from afar all kinds of abuse, till their voices were lost in the distance.

north, degraded and borne down through long silent centuries, by the weight of a pitiless and unsparing slavery. It is melancholy to think of all the excellent natural qualities which lie dormant in the hearts of these unnoticed and unfortunate races, but which are perverted, degraded, and too often extinguished, by the cruel yoke under which they labour.

In the freest nations, indeed, the nobler qualities of the race are developed in their full perfection and beauty only in a few individuals, and in the most enslaved there are original virtues naturally so strong, that no unfavourable circumstances have sufficed to extinguish them; but in a free nation, we may observe a certain freshness and healthiness, even in those in whom the ideal type of the national character is much defaced and blackened; whilst an enslaved people shows always a certain sickliness, even in its best and noblest specimens. What the Lettes might become, if their natural good qualities were allowed to expand under the invigorating influence of freedom, it is impossible for us to know; for no part of the race has for many centuries enjoyed independence; but partly from those peasants who have enjoyed the good fortune of being mildly and justly governed, partly from the many excellent characters even now to be found amongst them, and partly from the descriptions given by old chronicles of the primitive, patriarchal life of the ancient Lettes, we may in some measure guess how much the people are capable of improvement.

By nature, the Lettes are soft, docile, and sensitive, in the highest degree; qualities which, under more favourable circumstances, might form the finest characters; but slavery has so bent and perverted them, that they become pernicious and disgusting.

Their sensitive docility, which might have made them susceptible of the highest cultivation, has only turned to obsequious fawning and mean servility.

The Lettes are naturally clever, quick, intelligent, and inventive; but never emancipated for a moment from the labours of the plough, these qualities lie dormant, or show themselves only in every-day trifles; in the arrangement of their harness, the stitching of their furs, the plating of their shoes, and so on.

By nature the Lettes are friendly, open-hearted, and hospitable, and a stranger, an impartial and disinterested guest, coming to them as man to men, would certainly find them so; but when the German lords and their underlings have for centuries never entered their huts but as harsh despots and tyrannical tormentors, is it to be wondered at that the Lettes have become timid, suspicious, and deceitful,—that their dogs creep away, and their children scream and cry, whenever a *Vatsesh* (German) enters their doors?

The uncultivated Germans in this country entertain the greatest contempt for the unfortunate Lettes, forgetting that it is they who have made them what they are. "No Lette is to be trusted," they will tell you. "Mildness never does with them; you are sure to repent of any kindness you show them. The whip is the best argument you can use with them; you should rule them by means of brandy and flogging. The promise of a dram will make any traitor among them betray his accomplices, and discover a plot or a theft."

One quality which the Lettes share with all enslaved tribes, is a great disposition to thieving. It is remarkable, however, and very characteristic of them, that the Lettes never commit great robberies, and never steal any thing of considerable value, even when they have the opportu-



nity. A sack of gold might be left outside a door night and day, without being touched by a Lette; but there is hardly one of them, within whose reach needles, pipes, knives, ribbons, and other such trifles, can be safely trusted. A Lette who would return a piece of gold which he found, would not scruple to steal a copper *copek*, if he could.

## THE DWELLINGS OF THE LETTES.

The same style of architecture, common throughout the whole of Europe north of Prussia, prevails among the Lettes. Throughout Sweden, Finland, Lithuania, northern Russia, and the Baltic provinces, we find long, low, one-storied buildings; for in this severe climate the higher regions of the air are avoided, on account of their greater cold. The material is always the wood of the fir-tree, the trunks of which are laid horizontally upon one another. The gaps left between the logs are stuffed up with moss and oakum, and sometimes the whole is thickly covered, first with cow-skin, and afterwards with dung. Wood is always preferred to stone for building, because it is easier to work and repair, and because it is drier and warmer in winter, and cooler in summer.

A Lettish *Bauerhof*, consists of the dwelling-house, the stables, the cowhouses, the bathing-house, the *kleete*, and the *rige*. These buildings lie together in a circle or square, with a court in the centre, with generally some picturesque birch-trees grouped around, of which there is always at least one in the middle of the courtyard. On account of their passion for bathing, and for other reasons, these *Gehöfte* are always on the bank of some stream or river. Two or more *Gehöfte* sometimes stand together, but never enough to form any thing like a village, and they are oftener single. This isolation of each family, must of course make the progress of civilization very slow among them.

A narrow little passage, with high wooden walls on each side, leads to a little low wooden door, the only entrance into the *Gehöfte*. All the other doors and windows open into the courtyard. The dwelling-house may easily be distinguished by its size, and its number of little windows. On entering it by its low wooden door, a little hall presents itself, in the centre of which is a fire with the porridge kettle suspended over it. On the right-hand side is the sitting-room of the principal family, and on the left another room used for various purposes, principally for the dwelling of the serving men and maids. In the room on the right the *pater familias*, and his wife and children, eat, sleep, spin, weave, and in short, spend nearly their whole time. The oven is the most important article of furniture, the seat of honour, and the most favourite resting-place. It is built of Dutch tiles, around it are placed benches, and over it are sleeping-places, where the poor Lettes enjoy their greatest luxury, that of baking themselves, and at the same time indulging in the delights of the *dolce far niente*.

The other buildings are partitioned into an endless number of little divisions. There is one stable for the horse of the father of the family; another smaller one, hardly larger than a henroost, for those of the men; a stall for the cows, one for the sheep, a little building called a *kleete*, containing the clothes, linen, butter, flax, and corn of the family; another for those of the servants; a building for the carts and sledges, another for

ploughs and agricultural instruments, another for the drying of cheese, which is one of the principal dishes of the Lettes, a *rige* for the threshing and drying of grain, and finally a bath-room.

The Lettes are as passionately fond of bathing as the Russians themselves. Every Saturday the oven of the bath-room is heated. First the men go and bathe, and then the women. After the bath they are always in the highest spirits. A dish of boiled peas constitutes the usual supper after the bath; a white cloth is spread over a large table, and little heaps of boiled peas are scattered over it, which are eaten amidst laughing, talking, and singing, and every other kind of merriment. It is within the bath-room that most of the Lettes first see the light of day, for as it is the warmest and most undisturbed part of the *Gehöfte*, the oven is always heated there for a lying-in woman, and there she remains during her confinement.

Within the principal room, the Lettes fasten to one of the beams the smooth pliable stem of a young birch-tree, to the end of which is fixed a little cradle. Before every matrimonial couch there hangs such a cradle, in which the young infants are placed, and the smallest touch makes them rock for a considerable time. If therefore cradles are admissible at all, these are certainly excellent and useful in their kind.

The dwellings of the Lettes are altogether superior to those of the Esthonians, who build no separate houses for different purposes. When we enter an Esthonian house, we are generally at once in the bedroom, sitting-room, kitchen, provision-room, sheep-pen, and pigsty. The Lettes have always chimneys, whilst in the Esthonian houses, the smoke escapes by the door, together with a mixed multitude of unwholesome smells and vapours.

#### LETTISH COSTUME.

The national costume of the Lettes has nothing striking, either in colour, form, or material. The Lettes and Lithuanians, both male and female, dress exclusively in white and light gray; contrasting strongly with their neighbours, the Russians, who delight in the brightest and gaudiest colours. These pale gray, and grayish-white dresses, seem characteristic of the mild, quiet, timid, disposition of the people. Had they any of the fire and energy which we find in other nations, there is little doubt that such qualities would manifest themselves in the colour of their costume as with the tiger in his spotted skin.

The cloth of which their clothes are made, and which they manufacture themselves, is of two kinds; thick for winter, and thin for summer. The cut of their clothes is in many districts picturesque and very becoming. In some, the women wear cloaks of which the make and material strongly remind us of the Scottish plaid. These cloaks are hung at the edges with small pieces of metal, which, when the wearers are in motion, keep up a constant tinkling noise. Buttons are unknown to them; but their place is supplied by hooks, strings, and above all by the girdle, which keeps both coat and pantaloons in their places.

The pantaloons of the men do not reach below the knee, but cloths and ribbons are wound round the legs. The shoes of the Lettes are sandals, either of leather tied with strings, or else platted strips of the bark of lime-trees. The women wear shifts edged with red borders, full petticoats, and

closely-fitting bodices; and over the whole a large, thick, white mantle, which rises stiffly from the neck, and is fastened on the breast by a large brooch or agraffe. They expend most trouble and money upon this ornament, which is of very various forms and sizes, and generally made either of silver or amber. The latter material, being very common in this country, is worked up by them into a variety of ornaments.

The Lettes do not adorn themselves with flowers, as frequently as the Russians, The asparagus-plant, however, which is with them a symbol of a happy and fruitful marriage, is very much worn. In many districts a suitor never appears before his mistress without the stem of an asparagus in his hat. The girls generally stick the same kind of nosegay into their caps or hoods on Sundays.

Gloves are a very conspicuous and important part of Lettish costume. They consider the clothing of the hand as necessary as that of the foot or body. They are never to be seen without gloves. The boys who run behind the oxen and horses always wear gloves. The woodcutters in the forest never chop trees without gloves. A farm servant will use eight or ten pairs of gloves in the year. Gloves are very frequent presents among the Lettes; and at a wedding a bride generally gives away three or four hundred pairs among her guests. The Lettes make them of soft white wool, ornamented with a variety of red flowers, stars, and scrolls, of different shapes, of which they are continually inventing new ones.

Another very important article of dress, is the handkerchief, which is also often given away. It is made very ornamental, interwoven with silver threads, and set with silver fringes. It is regarded as an emblem of order and cleanliness, and is a favourite wedding ornament. Wedding guests wear handkerchiefs fastened in various ways, to their breasts and shoulders. Young girls will work for years to have a good provision of handkerchiefs, to wear and give away at their weddings.

The Lettes never part with their finery, for it is their custom to bury the dead in their most festive dresses.

#### THE BIRCH-TREE.

The olive was not of more use to the Athenians, the date-tree to the Arabs, and the wine, milk, butter, and wax palm-trees to the South Americans, than the birch-tree is to the Lettes. Of all the trees of Europe, it is the one which extends furthest north. It is gifted by Nature with great energy and strength. It seems to prefer the cold raw climate of the north, and the marshy soil and damp atmosphere of these countries; and can bear to be panoplied in ice for six months of the year. Its slender and beautiful growth, the great size it attains, the bright, tender, young green of its foliage in spring, the beautiful changes of colour which it assumes in autumn, brown, violet, yellow, and crimson; the graceful arrangement of its branches, and the picturesque manner in which it groups itself with other trees, render it the most beautiful, as it is already the most useful, tree in these countries. The birchwoods, or *Behrsen*, often present the most beautiful appearance; they resemble parks laid out by Nature. The Lettes, Esthonians, and Russians are passionately fond of these *Behrsen*, which in spring and summer are usually the scenes of their festivals, and of their swingings and dancings.



From its root to its summit, there is nothing in the birch-tree, neither leaves, wood, root, bark, nor juice, which is not turned to many different uses by the Lettes. The foliage, when young, fresh, and tender, has many medicinal qualities, and the buds and young sprouts are collected in great quantities in the spring, particularly for strengthening-baths, which are thought serviceable to people suffering from gouty and rheumatic affections. Rather later, in May and June, the leaves, which by this time are more fully developed, and are of a bright green colour, are collected for another purpose. They are boiled, and a beautiful yellow dye is extracted from them, which when mixed with other materials, produces again other colours, and is used by the Russians, Lettes, and Finns, to dye and ornament their clothes. In July and August, when the leaves have reached their full maturity, they are plucked with the little twigs on which they grow, for a very peculiar purpose. They are called *Slotes*, and are used by the Lettes to sprinkle and splash themselves when bathing. It is only just this period that will do for collecting them, because this is the time when the leaves are firmest on their branches. To have a good provision of *Slotes*, is an important thing to a Lettish household. Finally, in autumn, the dried fallen leaves are used for stuffing pillows and cushions.

The wood of the birch-tree is firmer, stronger, and more elastic than that of the fir, willow, or lime-tree, besides being more abundant; so that almost all their furniture, household utensils, and agricultural instruments are made of birchwood. Their carts, their sledges, tables, cradles, jugs, bottles, pails, are all of birchwood. The wood of the birch-tree when burnt, leaves excellent charcoal, and this charcoal is the most common kind of fuel in the north. From the roots are prepared the well-known birch-tar called "*deggot*."

The bark of this tree is very tough, thick, and water-tight; and the Lettes make from it very serviceable and ornamental bottles, baskets, flasks, cups, and other things. Of the plaited bark-shoes, which are sometimes of the birch and sometimes of the linden-tree bark, I have already spoken. The bark of the birch is also used in large quantities for thatching roofs, and a beautiful black dye is extracted from it.

From the juice of the birch-tree is prepared the ordinary drink of the Lettes, their "*Birkenwasser*," from which they also make vinegar; and in some districts they know how to boil it into a sweet syrup, which serves them instead of sugar. For those who are too poor to drink beer or mead, this northern wine is the only festive drink. Even the spungy and hard excrescences, the diseases of the tree, are turned to use by the Lettes, who cut them up into a number of useful little household articles. The birch-tree is, indeed, indispensable to these tribes, for it furnishes them with roof, clothing, furniture, wine, vinegar, sugar, bedding, fire, medicine, and indeed an almost endless number of necessities and luxuries.

#### THEIR FONDNESS FOR RIDING.

The Lettes are not at all fond of going on foot, and make use of the hoofs of their active little horses upon every occasion. Even the women always ride, and understand the managing of horses as well as the men. They even go to their work on horseback, or in sledges, and when a message is to be carried, the girl or lad to whom it is intrusted, immediately

jumps on horseback and gallops away. Hand-barrows, wheel-barrows, and other such vehicles are never used by the Lettes. They use their sledges and horses for every thing that has to be conveyed from one place to another; and they could not endure to carry with their own hands so much as the little portion of milk, the pound of butter, the little heap of flax, which they have to sell, or the hare they have secretly shot in the forest, or the bundle of wood they have felled there in the same unlawful manner. They will often harness two horses to a sledge, to take a single hare to market. They almost always go to church on horseback, or in sledges. When taking the dead to be buried, they place the coffin in a sledge, and ride behind it on horseback.

## WEDDING CUSTOMS.

The wedding customs of the Lettes, though they have much in common with other northern nations, have also much that is peculiar to themselves. After the suitor has made sure of the consent of his mistress and her relations, and has calculated exactly how many linen stockings, how many pounds of wool, and how many lambs his intended will bring him, and whether she has a cow or not, and whether she is an industrious housewifely maiden, he enters the house with various ceremonies and compliments, and addresses a poetical speech to the bride's father, or any person appointed to represent him. In this address he states that he wishes to find, for a friend of his, an industrious and virtuous maiden, who can bleach, wash, spin, weave, milk, sweep, knit, and sow. He has nowhere been able to find one to satisfy him, but is sure he shall be successful in so excellent and far-famed a household.

The spokesman of the bride thanks him for the intended honour, and places before him all the girls of the house, except the wished-for one. The suitor praises them, but declares that she he seeks is not present. He has heard there dwelt in this house the tenderest virgin, the gentlest lamb, the fairest dove, in the world. After various speeches, apologies, questions, and compliments on both sides, the bride at length comes forward. Two torches are borne before her, and two behind.

After she has given her consent, her father and suitor join hands, and drink a glass of brandy, beer, or mead together, and the betrothment is finished. At the wedding, the bride's procession, and that of the bridegroom come separately to the church, and they meet at the altar. As at the Russian weddings, crowns are placed on the heads of the bride and bridegroom. They are made of silver, or of silvered tin, and are formed into wreaths of flowers, leaves, or corn. On most estates there are several such crowns, which are borrowed by the peasants for their weddings. The weddings of the Lettes last three days. The first day passes at the bride's house. The handsomest unmarried wedding guest is usually chosen to conduct the bride to her husband's house, and is adorned with ribbons, handkerchiefs, gloves, and plumes of feathers. The bridegroom's house is decked out with branches of fir and birch, and with wreathes, plumes, and bunches of fantastically-arranged corn and grass, and with rows and festoons of red, yellow, and black berries.

The bride, decked out in all her finery, walks, silent and sad among her guests, helping them to mead and beer, shedding tears and imploring their compassion. Her grief at leaving her mother, her friends, and the

scenes of her youth, overpowers all her joy. Her unmarried female friends surround her, and endeavour to console her, by extolling the happiness of the marriage state. The married women raise one chorus, and the unmarried another, singing alternate verses, in which the one party praise the joys of youth and childhood, and lament the sorrows and pains of a matron's life, while the other side congratulate the bride, and enlarge upon the happiness and advantages of matrimony. They often become so zealous, that their voices rise to an absolute scream. The male guests amuse themselves in the mean time with eating and drinking. Every guest as he enters is welcomed and complimented by the bride, and greeted with an extempore couplet by the singers and jesters. The bride presents every guest, when he departs, with a white handkerchief and a pair of gloves.

When the hour for leaving her maternal house arrives, the grief of the bride attains its highest pitch. She avoids every one, runs away and hides herself. The relations in the mean time prepare her sledge, and when they find her she is placed in it, sitting on her mother-in-law's lap, with her bridesmaid by her side. The sledge is covered with white handkerchiefs, confined by gay-coloured ribbons. Bright bunches of feathers and little bells, announce to every passer by that it is a bridal sledge they see.

On the second day the bride is decorated with an elegant hood, and then receives a box on the ear from her mother-in-law, which the young lady duly passes on to her husband. The bridal bed is generally placed in the *kleete*, or provision-house, and the bridal feast held there. Curdled milk, with salt and leeks, cheese mixed with eggs, and their beloved pork, are the favourite dishes, and the table is decorated with poppies, mint, and sage.

#### LETTISH FUNERALS.

If the Lettish brides celebrate the greatest festival of their lives amid tears, the old Lettes, on the other hand, meet the bitter hour of death with remarkable cheerfulness and calmness. Perhaps the many evils and hardships they have to bear on earth, contribute as much as their hopes of futurity to make them regard with satisfaction the repose which terminates their weary lives. Whoever has stood by the deathbed of an old Lette, will have beheld an example of pious and philosophical resignation, such as is rarely seen on earth.

The night-watches of the Lettes by the corpses of their dead, resemble strikingly those of the Irish; the mourning women, the songs, the drinking, the mingled merriment and sorrow, are the same.

The Lettes have, like some other nations, a day set apart in remembrance of departed souls. On this day they set out a feast for the dead, and place torches by their graves to light them to the banquet. They do no work, but sit cowering together, and fancy every noise they hear to be caused by the ghosts of the dead.

The superstitions of the Lettes are more childish and absurd, than gloomy and terrible. In many places the snake is held sacred, and its skin used as an amulet. The wafers distributed to them by the priest at the sacrament, instead of swallowing, they will often keep in the mouth, and afterwards fasten them on their granaries, beehives, houses, &c., in the expectation that this will act as a charm, and draw down upon them the blessing of Heaven.



## THE ESTHONIANS.

## THEIR ORIGIN AND BOUNDARIES.

Few great European races have played so unimportant a part in the history of the world, as that of the Finns. With the exception of the Magyars, no single civilized nation has sprung from them. There is now no Finnish race which is not subject to the Russian sceptre; many of them, such as the Ingrians and Karelians, are utterly extirpated; and others have been so mixed with neighbouring nations, as quite to lose their Finnish character. Two only, the Esthonians and the Finlanders, having been subject to the Swedes and Germans before they were conquered by Russia, have become known to us. Those which fell at an early period under Russian servitude, have all either disappeared entirely, or been absorbed into the general mass of the Russian nation. Of the latter class are the Mordvines, Tsheremisses, &c. The whole province of Esthonia, as far as the Narova and the Peipus lake; the Oesel island, and the islands of Mõn, Dagoe, Kin, &c.; and the whole northern half of Livonia, including the Dorpat and Pernau districts, are inhabited by the Esthonians. Their territory contains about 700 square miles, and they amount to about half a million of souls.

## THEIR NATIONAL CHARACTER.

It is difficult to discover the fundamental peculiarities of a nation which has long laboured under the yoke of an oppressive slavery; but by comparing it with other nations in a similar condition, it may be possible in some measure to separate the original from the assumed features of the character. The subjection of the Lettes was an easy task to the Germans, whilst their wars with the Esthonians were long and bloody. Even when the conquest was concluded, the conquerors were for some time troubled by perpetual insurrections among them; whereas the Lettes submitted unresistingly to their yoke. This alone would be sufficient to prove the greater spirit and energy of the Esthonians; and although they have been deprived of freedom for so long a time, they have never ceased to value it, and never lose an opportunity of struggling to recover it. The Russians and Poles wear the fetters of their slavery with an ease and cheerfulness perfectly astonishing. They kiss the foot which is planted on their neck. The proud, stubborn, independent Esthonian, on the contrary, shows continually that his submission is forced, not voluntary. He humbles himself with difficulty, and bears his wrongs with smothered indignation. The Germans of Dorpat and other places, rank the character of the Esthonians, on this account, far higher than that of the Lettes; they *despise* the latter, while they *fear* the former. Whilst both nations were yet free, the Lettes used to suffer much from the aggressions of their warlike and adventurous neighbours.

The Lettes, and still more the Russians, have polite, respectful, and conciliating manners, while those of the Esthonians are rough, stern, and repulsive. They never greet one another in a friendly manner on meeting, as even the lowest Russians do; and even a German, if he does not happen to be their master, receives no sign of recognition. Deceitfulness

treachery, laziness, and a gloomy indifference to any improvement in his condition, the Esthonian shares with most other serfs; and these qualities he possesses in a far higher degree than the Russian, who is as faithful and industrious as a serf can possibly be. The peculiar disposition to petty thieving, which we have remarked as characteristic of the Lettes, may be also observed in their Esthonian brethren.

To the oppressed and tormented serfs of the Russian empire, brandy is so necessary as an antidote to the whip, that drunkenness is a sin equally prevalent among Esthonians, Lettes, Cossacks, and Russians. Brandy is with them the milk of young and old, the delight of men and women.

Though more energetic than the feeble Lette, the Esthonian only shows his energy in fighting and quarreling, and he is still more indolent at work. The plastic, quick, and pliable nature of this people is one of the most remarkable things about them. To imitate the skill of German mechanics, to learn to read and write very quickly, and almost without instructors, to become servant, soldier, steward, and labourer, with equal ease and rapidity, is as easy to the Esthonian as to the Lette and Russian. A nation whose favourite perfume is asafœtida (the women and children among the Esthonians are fond of hanging small pieces of asafœtida round their necks by way of a smelling-bottle) cannot be a delicate, tasteful, or cleanly people. In fact, with the exception of the Polish Jews, they are the most deficient in these points of any race in Europe. The Esthonians scarcely know what disgust is; and their dwelling-houses are more filthy and repulsive than the stables of the Lettes and Russians.

The Lettes are generally despised as effeminate and cowardly, and the Esthonians as discourteous and filthy; but on the whole, the former have far more that is agreeable and lovable, and are more generally liked.

Like all Finnish races, the Esthonians are not of a large stature. Slender and tall figures are rarely seen among them. Their Mongolian origin is evident in their features; in their small eyes, broad cheeks, pointed noses, double chins, and small mouths. Their complexion is more sallow than that of the Lettes, and their hair flaxen or yellow. The women are generally fatter than the men; but it may be more owing to the state of servitude in which they live, than to any natural peculiarity, that a portly man is so rarely seen among them.

#### HOUSES, COSTUME, AND MANNER OF LIFE.

The appearance of an Esthonian *Bauehof* is the *ne plus ultra* of dirt, disorder, and misery. Their villages look as if they had been plundered by a Tartar horde. Their household utensils and furniture are rough and rude, and their food coarse and scanty. No doubt many savages enjoy more comfort and luxury in their miserable wigwams, than these Esthonians in their still more miserable houses.

The architecture of the Esthonian dwellings is fundamentally the same as that of other nations. Their materials are the same as those from which the Swede builds his clean, neat houses, and with which the Russians make their dwellings so gay, bright, and ornamental; but devoid of all love of cleanliness, order, and beauty, the Esthonians make no attempt at improving their hovels. The beams of which they are built are left rough

and dirty as when first taken from the forests. They never raise their houses above the ground-floor, notwithstanding the dampness of the soil. Chimneys they have none, and their only windows are holes bored in the wall. The doors of their stoves are left open, and the smoke escapes partly through these holes, and partly through the straw roof. The dwellings of the Lettes seem comfortable compared to those of the Esthonians. Not only are there partitions in the cottages of the former to separate man from beast; but for the different labours and necessities of the house, different rooms are provided. In the Esthonian houses, both men and beasts sleep, work, eat, drink, and live in the same room; men, women, and children, the sick and the healthy, grunting pigs, barking dogs, sucking goats, bleating lambs, are all huddled together. The benches and tables look as if they had grown up by chance in the forests. Latches, locks, and door-handles are unknown.

On festive occasions the Esthonians strew their floors with fir-branches. Their lights are long, thin sticks of birchwood, called "*pergel*," which they fasten into the niches of the walls. As in winter they often sit for months together in their smoke-filled rooms, spinning and weaving by the light of these *pergel*, it is surprising that there remains a single pair of healthy Esthonian eyes. They are passionately fond of the Russian bath; and accordingly, by the side of each cottage, they build bathing-houses, where, in the enjoyment of their favourite luxury, they forget once a week their cares, sorrows, and diseases. They do not live scattered over the country, like the Lettes, but always in straggling irregular villages. The appearance of an Esthonian village, is one of the most cheerless in the world. The houses stand crooked and rough near one another, generally half-fallen and decayed. Some are inhabited and others deserted. There are no gardens; scarcely a trace of cultivation is to be seen; only here and there a lonely fir or birch remains standing. Even in the height of spring and summer, scarcely a green herb or blade of grass is to be found near these desolate places.\*

The Esthonians dress for the greater part in black or dark-brown wool. The dark cloth which they weave is called *vadmal*; and of this *vadmal*, are made their coats, cloaks, mantles, trousers, jackets, and petticoats. Even their stockings and gloves are of black cotton, and their furs are of the same colour, which contrast strongly with their fair complexions.

Although so careless of every thing that can contribute to the comfort and beauty of their homes, yet they are attentive to personal appearance,

\*I made this sketch of Esthonian "life" from the impressions left upon my mind by what I had myself seen of the domestic arrangements of the people. A friend to whom I communicated my manuscript, looked upon my description of the dirt and disorder of the houses as exaggerated, though he admitted that in its general features the picture was correct. He made the following reasonable remarks on the subject: "Many Esthonians weave very neat and clean linen and cloth; how could they do this in the midst of such filth? Nor are all the houses sunk in swamps and bogs. I remember to have seen many parts between Dorpat and Reval, on the Kassiner estate, for instance,—where the villages were really very pretty. There were plantations of hops before the houses, and cabbage-gardens enclosed in hedges of hemp, to keep the butterflies from the cabbages. As I approached Reval I saw many houses that were kept in excellent order. The same will apply to the country between Reval and Narva. In all the towns of Esthonia, moreover, the peasants sell good *clean* butter; how would it be possible for such butter to be manufactured in the holes of abomination you describe?"—I give the reader my friend's remarks along with the result of my own observations.



in their own way; they are by no means devoid of vanity, and expend much on certain favourite pieces of finery.

Among these are the "*preesen*" of the women. They were originally only breast-pins to confine the shift, but by the addition of various ornaments, they have reached such a size, as to cover the breasts of the women like shields. In every district, these *preesen* are made differently; they are also different for married and unmarried women. All the trinkets, rings, crucifixes, shells, coins, bits of coral and amber, &c., which the Esthonian women possess, they invariably suspend to this piece of armour: so that when they are dressed in full holiday costume, they clink and tinkle at every motion.

They also ornament their black dresses with red borders and embroidery. They cut various fantastic figures of flowers, birds, &c., out of red cloth, and sew them to their clothes. Their shoes are the same as those worn by the Lettes.

The Lettes always shave the beard off quite close; the Russians let their hair grow just as nature pleases, on chin, cheeks, and lips. The Esthonians adopt both plans; the former for unmarried, the latter for married men. Whilst the Russians cut the hair close round the head, the Esthonians, male and female, young and old, allow their golden locks to wave freely in long unrestrained ringlets; except in a few districts, where the unmarried women plait their hair, and the married raise it in a high tower on the top of the head. The unmarried women wear as head-dress a high piece of pasteboard cut into points and curves, bent round the head like a coronet, which is covered with red woollen or silk. In front this diadem rises to a considerable height, but behind it is low, and set with brooches, fluttering ribbons, and other ornaments. The matrons wear either caps or hoods, or at least a red band round the hair, set with glass beads.

The Esthonians have no looking-glasses among them, but necessity is the mother of invention, and the Esthonian women have a resource of their own. When about to make their toilets, they pour water into a wooden vessel, and contemplate their charms in this primitive and Arcadian kind of mirror.

Their ignorance of the commonest mechanical inventions, is inconceivably great. The following anecdote illustrates this: A young Esthonian girl was taken into the service of a nobleman's family, to whose estate she belonged. In one of the rooms a clock hung against the wall, and a glass door in the case, admitted a view of the restless and busy pendulum. For some time, the young girl contemplated in silent astonishment the wonderful and mysterious being. At length she exclaimed, "I have been here five days, and nobody has given the creature any thing to eat! It will starve if it isn't soon fed!"

The Esthonians, unlike the Lettes, are very fond of vegetable; "*Appo Capsa*" (sour cabbage) is one of their favourite national dishes. Barley-porridge is not so staple an article of food with them as with the Lettes. The poorer among the Esthonians live almost entirely on "*Kört*," a kind of thick soup, or barley broth. The *Körtkettle* hangs over the fire in the middle of the house, and above it is suspended a large piece of rock-salt, which is put, for a short time, into the soup, when it begins to boil.

The dish most prized by the Lettes, is pork in various shapes; their idea of supreme happiness consists in eating plenty of pork. They

tell one another that the czar of all the Russias is so great a man, that he has every day on his table the most delicious pork, and bacon "as sweet as almonds." They themselves never taste it but on great festival-days.

"*Katya*" is the common drink of the Esthonians, and much resembles German small-beer. Brandy, however, they much prefer; their passion for this fiery poison is inconceivable. Unfortunately it is the temporary interest of those above them, to encourage this pernicious propensity; for the chief revenue of many Esthonian noblemen is derived from the distilleries, where the peasants buy their brandy. It is a positive fact that a Temperance Society, which it was proposed to establish here, *was publicly forbidden*. There have, however, been among the nobles a few honourable exceptions, who have done all in their power to open the eyes of the people. A Count Manteuffel, and a physician of the name of Kreuzwaldt have written many little works on the injurious effects of brandy. A Herr von Lippart has set the admirable example of having an additional discourse on the bad consequences of intemperance, preached to his peasants every Sunday, when divine service is over.

#### MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

The Esthonians celebrate, by various ceremonies, the three great eras of human life, the beginning, the end, and the zenith; birth, death, and marriage. Their customs at the birth and christening of a child differ little from those of other nations, probably because the Christian ceremony of baptism has extirpated those of the old barbarians. One peculiar custom remains, that of hanging round the neck of a new-born child, a piece of *asafætida*, which is looked on as a charm, and is believed to bring about many beneficial effects.

At burials, their customs resemble those of many other northern nations. They make long speeches to the dead, asking, "Why hast thou not remained longer with us? Was not thy *puddro* (gruel) to thy taste? Wilt thou never revisit our bathing-rooms? &c." Food is put into the graves of the dead, and feasts are prepared for them on certain days, as among the Lettes. The Esthonians never wear any particular costume by way of mourning; but widows, after the death of their husbands, for some time wear their *preesen* turned inside out. At every burial a nail is driven into the threshold of the house-door.

A custom which dates back no further than the Reformation, is that of the Martin's and Catherine's beggars, as they are called. On the 9th of November, the young lads trick themselves out in fantastic disguises and go from house to house, collecting presents and gifts; on the 24th of November, the young girls do the same. It is supposed that this custom was instituted in honour of Martin Luther and Catherine von Bora. The young Germans in Reval and Dorpat celebrate these evenings in the same way. On Christmas-eve, the Esthonian girls assemble together and choose a queen, around whom they seat themselves on the straw-covered ground. After various songs have been sung, the queen demands all the ornaments, garlands, &c. of her attendants, and hangs them about her own person. Forfeits are given and redeemed: and by way of a close to the game, each of the girls sings a verse or two as an entreaty for the restitution of her property, which she then receives back.

The wedding customs of the Esthonians are curious and peculiar. The

young girls begin their preparations for marriage while yet mere children. They often weave and spin for ten years to supply themselves with a sufficient number of gloves, handkerchiefs, stockings, &c., for a wedding dowry. Offers of marriage are made, not by the lover himself, but by some friend of his, or by his parents, who enter the house of the bride, bearing mead and brandy. On their entrance, the bashful maiden whose hand is sought hides herself, as among the Lettes. The lover's proxy opens his proposals, by inviting the inhabitants of the house to drink, and by relating a fabulous story of a lost lamb or foal, which he is seeking. If they refuse the invitation, and declare their ignorance of the lost cattle, it is a sign that they reject the offer. If they mean to accept it, they drink with the suitor, and give him leave to look about for his lost lamb. When found, the bride also drinks, and after a few days the bridegroom visits her for the first time, bringing her various presents.

On the wedding-day both processions go separately to church, and afterwards proceed together to the house of the bride. Some of the women, friends of the bride, pour a can of beer over the head of the bridegroom's horse, and scatter a handful of rye over the heads of the bridal couple.

The marriage feast is then eaten, and masking, mumming, and other sports occupy the day. The next morning the bride, completely muffled up in sheets and quilts, perhaps the better to hide her tears, is taken home to her husband's house. Her brother acts as her coachman. On arriving at her husband's house, she seats herself in her brother's lap, and her mother, in due form, invests her with the hood and costume of a matron. The bridegroom's hat is then placed over her hood, which she three successive times throws off her head, and receives again, in token that she protests against the supremacy of man, but is willing not the less to tolerate it. A slight box on the ear is then given her, in token of the authority of her husband. Afterwards the bride deals out her presents to her guests, and receives from them promises of future presents; of sheep, horses, beehives, &c. In the evening she dances once with every guest, and receives a small present in money in return. The day after the wedding-night, the young wife, attended by all the guests, makes a tour of the house, and sweeps up the hearth by way of initiation into her future duties.

#### SUPERSTITIONS OF THE ESTHONIANS.

The old practices and ceremonies of heathenism have been preserved more completely among the Esthonians than among any other Lutheran people. All the trees, caves, or hills which were then sacred, are so still, and there are many such spots where the peasants yet offer up sacrifices; at some places food, money, or trinkets; at others garlands, branches, and and crosses. Many old trees are regarded by them as the haunts of mighty spirits. There is one where they would not venture to pluck a leaf or blade of grass as far as its shadow reaches, much less to touch any leaf of the tree itself. It is a singular fact that the Esthonians seem to have an aversion to the consecrated places of Christianity; if they can, they much prefer burying their dead in some spot of their own choice, in the depths of the forest, or in the wilderness, rather than in the churchyards. Many such lonely graves may be found in the wildest parts of the country, marked only by the solitary mounds erected over them.



Among the Esthonians, Thursday is the unlucky day of the week, as Monday is with the Russians, and Friday with many other nations. They ascribe supernatural influences to various substances, but particularly to asafœtida. are to them the most sacred of all animals; they scarcely ever kill them, and never but when they wish to apply the healing powers ascribed to them to the cure of some disease. They are fond of concealing a bottle of brandy about them, when they go to church, "that the word of God may pass over it, and sanctify it," after which it is considered an infallible specific against many diseases.

When they are about to build a house, they lay herbs and leaves on the ground to attract the ants; if black ants first make their appearance, it is a good, if red, an evil omen.\* Good or bad omens are also drawn from the behaviour of a horse when taken to the house of a sick person.

#### AGRICULTURE OF THE ESTHONIANS.

During the five centuries they have been subject to German sway, the Esthonians have scarcely adopted from their masters a single improvement in any of the useful arts, and they still cultivate, not only their own fields, but those of their lords, in the old Esthonian fashion. Barley, oats, and rye are the kinds of grain most cultivated; wheaten bread is never eaten but on great festivals. Horticulture is unknown among the Esthonians; they have neither flower, fruit, nor vegetable gardens. It is rare to see so much as a few stunted and solitary apple-trees growing in their courtyards. Even potatoes are all but unknown to them, and cabbages are almost the only vegetables they eat. The tending of bees is a very important part of their occupations. By means of thick trunks of trees, which they saw off and hollow out, and in which they place their beehives, they manage to preserve these animals even through the piercing cold of the northern winter. They use honey in the making of cakes, mead, and all holiday dishes.

The Esthonians are far bolder hunters and fishermen than the Lettes. An Esthonian, though alone and armed only with a single-barrelled piece, will follow a bear into his den, when one false aim is likely to be followed by certain death.

No branch of industry or manufacture is carried on by the Esthonians with a view to commerce. Each man makes for himself every thing he needs. In their houses the men employ themselves in bending and fastening the birchwood into sledge-runners, or in splitting it up into staves; in making hoops for casks, in manufacturing wooden plates, dishes, spoons, &c., or in preparing their sheepskins. The women, meanwhile, are engaged in weaving, spinning, sowing, and bleaching; in cutting torches out of birchwood, and in plaiting its bark into sandals. Thus have they gone on for a thousand years; will the next thousand years work no greater change among them? Who knows?

\* This practice is founded, however, on experience, as may be the case with many other national superstitions, could we trace them to their origin. Red ants—the evil omen of the Esthonians—are generally found in a damp soil; black ants in a dry one.

THE SLAVERY AND RECENT EMANCIPATION OF THE ESTHONIANS  
AND LETTES.

The first beginning, the gradual extension, and the ultimate universality of the slavery in which the aborigines of these countries have so long been sunk, has been often inquired into, but never established. There are no laws, edicts, or documents on record, which distinctly declare the forfeiture of all their rights by the conquered people, nor are there any in which can be discovered a legal origin, or a recognition of the principle of hereditary servitude. On the contrary, many old contracts and laws of the Germans, after the completion of their conquest, might be pointed out to prove that the conquered races, even after the period of their subjugation, were looked on in the light of freemen. In some old documents at Riga, the Lives and Lettes are spoken of as a fourth estate, co-operating with the three German estates.

The first step was probably only to demand occasional labour for their conquerors from the aborigines, leaving them free possession of a portion of their former property and leisure. The frequent and unsuccessful insurrections and conspiracies among the Lettes and Esthonians led to more tyrannical laws, and to severer restrictions. Partly to punish such insurrections, and partly to prevent their repetition, link was gradually added to link in the chain which bound the conquered people, until it was at last established, that he who could demand the labour of a peasant should become the supreme lord and master of the labourer, and all that belonged to him. The peaceable and defenceless races of shepherds, whose few struggles for freedom only served to humble and subject them more to the overpowering German warriors, found themselves hemmed in continually more and more by their masters, who intermeddled with the most private and domestic affairs of their oppressed tenants, whose every concern was regulated according to the interest of their lords.

From the first commencement, however, of their slavery, attempts have continually been made to lighten it. The clergy were the first who acted as mediators with the nobility for the serfs. Papal ordinances of the thirteenth century are extant, which intercede in favour of the latter, "that they may not be worse off than they were while yet under the dominion of Satan." Nobles who forced their serfs into marriages, were threatened with excommunication; the rigid observance of various holidays, on which the serfs were free from labour, was rigidly inculcated; it was forbidden to take the life of a peasant without the sentence being confirmed by the *Vogt*, *Landknecht*, and *Schreiber*, who were to be present, as well as the elders of an adjoining estate. The Teutonic knights likewise enacted various statutes in favour of the peasantry, commanding that "masters, and those in authority under them, should see that their stewards did not act unfairly towards the countrymen, nor overload them with an unreasonable amount of labour."

Many improvements in their condition were attempted, and in part carried out, by the Swedish and Polish governments. Gustavus Adolphus admitted them into the Gymnasium and University of Dorpat. and there were even some who became professors there. His successor, Charles XI., followed his example, and planned the entire emancipation of the serfs,

which his death, however, prevented. The wars of Charles XII. desolated the whole country, and the work of liberation, so well begun by his predecessors, remained at a standstill. The Russian conquest extinguished every trace of it. The Russians, unaccustomed to freedom in their own country, did not sympathize with the want of it in others. The universal exhaustion occasioned by the Swedish and Russian wars, and the desolating plague which followed, rendered the peasantry tame and unresisting. At length, the revolutionary spirit of the eighteenth century roused the serfs from their lethargy; complaints, conspiracies, and insurrections, continually occurred, and in the years 1783 and 1784 a revolt broke out among the Livonian peasantry, which was not put down without much bloodshed. The serfs of many estates in Central Livonia had leagued together in secret, had sent deputations first to Riga, and afterwards to St. Petersburg, praying for a relief from their burdens; and at last, when all other means proved vain, nothing remained to the poor forsaken slaves, but to break out into rebellion, and become a prey to the cannon directed against them by their tyrants.

After the revolt had been extinguished, many of the nobles themselves generously took up the cause of humanity and freedom for their oppressed slaves. Still, although much sympathy for them was generally excited, and their cause was openly and frequently discussed, yet the nineteenth century began without any thing having actually been done for their relief. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that they lost all patience, and that in 1802 they again rose in revolt under "Poor Conrad," or as he was called at Riga, the "Lettish Buonaparte." They were again subdued, but the sanguinary termination of the insurrection had filled every mind with terror and dismay. The writings of Merkel and others had, meanwhile, attracted the attention of other countries, to the bondage in which the original inhabitants of the Baltic provinces were sunk. The Russian throne was occupied by a beneficent and humane ruler; the time was in every respect favourable; and the cry for a thorough and permanent improvement in the condition of the serfs, became louder and louder. After many fruitless meetings of the nobility, and deputations from them to the emperor, the matter was at last taken in hand by Alexander himself. He appointed a committee at St. Petersburg, under his own superintendence and that of his chancellor Kotshubey; and in the year 1804 an imperial edict was issued, which materially changed and improved the condition of the peasantry of Livonia and Esthonia.

Courland remained in the same condition as before, until the year 1817, when, by the energy and praiseworthy exertions of the governor of the provinces, General Paulucci, Courland also was brought under the influence of the new law, and the Emperor Alexander received, at Mitau, the thanks of the nobility and peasantry of Courland.

The serfs were not, however, at once placed in the possession of their liberty. Fourteen years of a state of transition were to prepare them for a slow and gradual emancipation. The whole enslaved population of the country was divided into certain classes according to ages, and every year a fourteenth of each class, a fourteenth of the boys, a fourteenth of the men, a fourteenth of the old men, &c., were emancipated. In 1831 the emancipation was completed. The year 1817 was taken as the normal year, by which future years were to be governed; that is, the labours performed by the peasants for their masters during that year were set down in each estate as a



measure for their future labours. Inventories were taken on each state, in which were set down the number of horses, cows, agricultural instruments, &c., belonging to each "*Gesinde*." These things were declared to be fixtures on the "*Gesinde*," and were to be delivered to the farmer on entering upon his farm, and to be returned again at the expiration of the lease. The punishment which the master might inflict, as well as the labour he might exact, were distinctly fixed, and tribunals of the peasants themselves were established. The condition of the peasant of the Baltic provinces is now about as follows:

He is no longer bound to the soil, but may, after half-a-year's notice given to his lord, quit the estate. In the same way his lord may, after half-a-year's notice, force the peasant to leave the place of his birth. This alteration can be but a small benefit to the serf. His situation must become quite intolerable, before he resolves on leaving the spot on which he was born, and where he has passed all the days of his life, the home of his fathers, his relations, and his friends, to take advantage of his right of self-exile. Besides, a noble has always a hundred ways by which, if he wishes it, he can detain the peasant. Difficult as it is for him to gain subsistence, he is continually needing little helps and loans from his landlord, of which payment can at any time be suddenly demanded in such a manner as to make his departure impossible.

Though the right which the peasant has thus obtained, is so frequently useless to him, the counter-right of his master, of banishing him from his native place, is very often turned against him. Formerly a noble could not by any means get rid of his serfs; and whenever they were in want, he was forced to support and maintain them. At present, the moment a peasant becomes useless or burdensome, it is easy to dismiss him; on account of which the serfs, in some parts of the provinces, would not accept of the emancipation offered, and bitterly lamented the freedom, as it was called, which was forced upon them. The Lette often mournfully complains, that he has lost a father, and kept a master, and his lord now often refuses the little requests of his peasants, saying, "You know you are not my children now!"

No lasting good effects can be expected from the emancipation law, till the further step shall have been taken of granting the peasant the right of acquiring a property in land. Only then can the industry of the peasant be awakened; only then will he manifest a wish for improvement; only then will he struggle to raise himself from his present abasement. The prosperity of the whole country would be promoted, and doubtless the nobles themselves would benefit largely; but there appears so very little prospect of so desirable an event, that it is hardly worth while to speculate much on the results. If the cause of the Lettes and Esthonians could be treated separately, there would be some hopes for them; but the government dare not, if they would, on account of their other enslaved provinces, yield full freedom to the serfs on the Baltic; and the few who are anxious to do so, are overpowered by the multitudes who either desire the contrary, or take no interest in the affair. Until the constitution of Russia itself is changed, the liberation so well begun, will hardly progress much further.

As the most important consequence of the emancipation of the Esthonians and Lettes, we may designate the efforts made of late years for their mental improvement. The acquired knowledge of these races was

formerly almost solely of a religious character, for though reading was often taught them, yet it was entirely confined to hymns and psalm-books, and their religious knowledge did not extend beyond the church-catechism. Schools there were very few, and the little knowledge they possessed was communicated by their parents, generally by their mothers. Parents who could not read themselves, but who wished their children to learn, engaged the services of old and infirm people, who, unfit for active employments, were accustomed to travel about from *Gesinde* to *Gesinde*, earning their livelihood by teaching what they could. The pastor also made his periodical visits, to superintend the progress of his flock. In summer, however, every thing was generally forgotten that had been learned in winter.

It is very difficult to calculate any thing like a correct average of the degree of knowledge and cultivation attained by the Esthonians and Lettes. There are no materials, for instance, for the formation of statistical tables, intended to show how many among them have acquired the faculty of reading and writing. The nation is so dependant on its superiors, that the differences observable in different villages, and on different estates, are very great. One master, who governs justly and beneficently, may exert himself for the enlightenment of his people, by the establishment of schools and the payment of teachers, and will thus often exercise the most favourable influence on them, and make them civilized, intelligent, virtuous, and enlightened; whilst the carelessness, the severity, or the inattention of another, will thoroughly demoralize and barbarize those subject to him. A friend in Courland gave me the following calculation of the state of cultivation among his parishioners: Of 2470 Lettes who had been confirmed, 2056 could read more or less well, and on an average, seventy-seven out of every hundred males who had received the rites of confirmation, and eighty-eight out of every hundred females, could read. It will often happen, however, that the most marked contrast manifests itself between the peasants on two estates immediately adjoining to each other, and to estimate the general condition of the people it would be necessary to have separate returns from each estate.

Since the emancipation of the serfs, a great impulse has been given to the progress of these people. Translations of popular German works have appeared in both languages; Esthonian and Lettish journals have been published for their instruction and amusement; German dictionaries and grammars for the use of Lettes and Esthonians have been printed, and schools have very much increased in number, particularly in Courland. One natural consequence of the education and comparative freedom of the Lettes, is their *Germanization*. As uncultivated slaves, they obstinately retained for centuries their old traditions, their ancestral customs, their national costume, and their barbarous superstitions. As educated freemen, all this becomes repugnant to them, and as the first impulse of freedom and refinement was given by their German lords, and not by themselves, it naturally leads them to the imitation of those lords.

It is too late now to exalt the dialects of the Esthonians and Lettes into civilized languages, all the intelligent and cultivated among them professing a great contempt for their own people and a great attachment to every thing German, and it may be therefore expected that they will become every day more and more German. The number of them who learn German daily increases. The influence of the old heathen supersti-

tions vanishes more and more, and the German is rapidly supplanting the Lettish and Esthonian costume. The law enacted, about five years ago, that all Lettes and Esthonians should adopt a surname is another sign of this Germanization. Formerly they never had family names, but generally added the name of the *Gesinde* to which they belonged to their Christian names; as, for example, Yanne (John) living at Kintegesinde, would be called Yanne of Kintegesinde, or Kinte's Yanne. Should there happen to be more than one Yanne at Kintegesinde, adjectives were added, such as "tall," "fat," "small," "bad," "good," Yanne, &c. As long as they were bound to the soil, such designations were quite sufficient, but when they became free, and frequently changed their abode, the inconvenience of the want of surnames began to be felt, and the peasants on the different estates were assembled, and commanded to choose themselves names. This was a most puzzling difficulty to many. Some took the names of the *Gesinde* where they lived; others adopted common German names, such as Müller, Meyer, Bergmann, and others would request some German to allow them to adopt his name. These surnames, however, are only used on official occasions, so that their owners very frequently forget them, and are much puzzled when asked their own names.

#### THE GERMANS AND RUSSIANS.

As in the west of Germany, Alsace and Lorraine are rapidly losing all political traces of their mother-country, and blending more and more with France, so in the East, the Baltic provinces are daily becoming more and more Russian, and losing their German character. The struggle, however, which is pretty nearly over in the French dominions, is still going on here, Russia cannot, like France, supply the place of privileges given up by the rights of free citizenship; complete subjection to a foreign despotism is all the Germans of the Baltic provinces can expect, if they yield their peculiar privileges. Russia cannot, like France, offer them a polished and elegant language and literature in exchange for their own. A comparison, firstly of the institutions, secondly of the religions, and thirdly of the languages of the Germans and Russians, will present this in a clearer light.

#### GERMAN AND RUSSIAN INSTITUTIONS.

The treaty of Nystadt, which ceded the Baltic provinces to Russia, obtained for the Germans the continuation of their civic constitutions and privileges, and those of their corporations of nobility. This concession was partly the result of their own brave defence, and partly of Peter the Great's generosity and partiality for these countries. By this treaty the Germans were not only to retain their own language, their Lutheran religion, and to be confirmed in possession of all their landed property, but the cities were to keep their old free constitutions, and their privileged guilds and corporations, and the nobles their colleges, knightly orders, titles, and rights. The provinces were declared free from certain Russian taxes, and from the duty of furnishing recruits to the army. But many of these rights have since been much infringed upon. Taxes have more and more shackled their commerce, and recruits are demanded from them as from the other Russian dominions. The Empress Catherine, indeed,



did all she could to erase all the peculiarities of the Baltic provinces, and to make them thoroughly like the rest of the empire; but Paul, her successor, partly for the sake of pleasing the nobles, and more for the sake of frustrating his mother's plans, undid all she had done.

At present the cities have their old German magistrates, *Rathsherrn*, and aldermen, in the same way as the old imperial German cities. The nobles of Livonia and Esthonia form three colleges, those of Oesel, Esthonia, and Livonia. These colleges send deputies to the diets of Reval, Riga, and Arensburg, which meet every three years. These diets are presided over by the *Adelsmarschall*. The highest body is the college of *Landrätthe*, formerly the supreme government of the country. The knightly orders remain closed corporations, and no one, Russian, German, or foreigner, can demand admission into them. They grant or refuse at will the *indigenat* (naturalization), and with it the right of possessing landed property, or filling any public office.

The whole constitution of Livonia and Esthonia is thoroughly German. German customs are followed throughout, and all important offices are filled by Germans, only the minor branches of the administration—the police, the tax-collectors, &c.—are Russian. Still the Germans tremble at the increasing encroachments of the Russians. Russian colonies have formed themselves about Riga and the other cities, and loudly demand an equality of rights with the German citizens, and a seat in their assemblies. The Russian nobility of Moscow and St. Petersburg look with envy on the privileges of the German nobles, and the ministers think it hard that they should always be obliged to except from all general rules these privileged provinces. The Czar himself, indeed, still extends the gracious shield of his protection over his German subjects, but who can know whether his successors will continue to do so?

The Duchy of Courland is in the same position as Livonia and Esthonia, although this province passed under Russian domination without a capitulation or treaty. When, in 1795, the Duke of Courland abdicated his crown, the nobility of the country, not merely in their own name, but in those of the citizens and peasants, sent a deputation to St. Petersburg, and offered the Empress Catherine the ducal crown of the province. "Under what conditions?" asked the Empress, turning contemptuously away. They replied, "Under no conditions: we throw ourselves at your Majesty's feet!" These deputies are now regarded as traitors to the liberties of their country, and it is related as a just retribution upon them, that, though the Russian government loaded them all with titles, honours, and wealth, yet there was not one of them but died in comparative poverty.

The rights of the cities were still less attended to at the cession of Courland than those of the rest of the country. The citizens afterwards sought to gain what they could by deputations to St. Petersburg, and, though much of their former freedom of trade has been taken from them, yet their constitution is still tolerably German. Although the Baltic provinces are discontented with the encroachments of the Russians, yet it must not be imagined that this arises from any thing but provincial anxiety for the retention of provincial privileges. It must not be imagined that there exists any disloyal feeling towards the Russian government, any revolutionary tendency, or any political or patriotic sympathy with Germany. The Germans are the most loyal people in the world. They

cling to the present, and whatever may be the nature or origin of the governing authority for the time being, they always show themselves faithful to it. The inhabitants of the Baltic provinces are, accordingly, the most loyal subjects of the Russian Czar, and although they complain of the system of his government, and the peculiarities of his nation, yet they honour and love their ruler himself, as their beneficent and powerful protector. They have no love or sympathy for any German state, and a German patriot, who, after hearing the complaints of his countryman in the Baltic provinces against Russia, should exclaim "Brothers, cast off the Russian yoke; throw yourselves into the arms of your great mother-country!" would receive a cold or indignant reply.

Prussia, so close a neighbour, so much resembling them in natural features, and in historical recollections, would seem to be the country with which these provinces were most likely to sympathize and unite; but what an immense chasm has arisen between them since the days of the knightly orders! Prussia has advanced in the march of improvement, has made all classes equal, has confined the power of the nobles, destroyed the privileges of the middle ages, emancipated the Jews, done away with the guilds, rooted out slavery, and almost entirely Germanized her Slavonian and Lettish subjects. The Baltic provinces are almost in the same state as in the middle ages; have still privileged classes, exempt from taxes and from military service, and nearly all the other institutions of the old feudal system. Their men of letters still stand in the same position to the nobility as in Luther's time. No, young Russia, with all her sins on her head—with her bad administration, her venality, her anti-Germanism, her hatred of provincial privileges, but also with her moderate taxes, vast empire, and immense power, is dearer to the Baltic provinces than Prussia, with her order, her equality, her national education, and her heavy taxes. If, however, you ask the German of Courland or Livonia, who neither wishes his country to be incorporated with a German state, nor is thoroughly contented with the dominion of Russia, what it is he wishes, he will perhaps cautiously and gradually confide to you the secret and dear wish of his heart, that in some indefinite perspective he always sees before him—namely, the return of national independence. He longs again to have free trade, no taxes, no tolls, no restrictions, no recruits, and at the head of the government to have again a grand-master, or a few petty dukes! And who knows whether our children's children may not at some future time see the Baltic provinces reunite themselves to the great German League, as three separate and independent little states?

#### LUTHERANISM AND THE RUSSIAN-GREEK CHURCH.

The Lutheranism of these countries is of a very peaceable, quiet, and tolerant character; still the Germans of these provinces are far too enlightened not to be truly attached to their religion, and averse to changing it for another.

The character of the Greek church is far milder and more tolerant than that of the Catholic church. It stands under the dominion not of one supreme priest but of a temporal power. The Russians too have, as the Romans had, a certain respect and reverence for the religions and creeds of others, however different from their own. They have not sought to con-

vert the nations of different religions who have come under their authority; and their vast empire contains numbers of Lutherans, Catholics, Mahomedans and heathens, all tolerated with perfect equality.

The relation between the Russians and the Lutherans is a very friendly one. The hatred which exists between the Catholics and Protestants has never existed between them, and the horror of Popery and the Pope, instilled into all Lutherans from their cradles, does not extend to the Greek church. The German princesses too, who have married into the imperial family of Russia, have been almost always Lutherans.

The Lutheran pastors in Livonia are partly appointed by the nobles, and partly chosen by the congregations of the cities. The pastors of a district stand under a *Propst*, and he again under the consistory of the province. The three upper consistories of Livonia, Esthonia, and Courland, are governed by a general Consistory, and by the general superintendents of the three provinces at St. Petersburg, who are quite independent of the Synod, which regulates the spiritual affairs of Russia.

But however tolerant the Greek church generally may be, yet it must not be forgotten, that in single instances it is frequently very much the contrary. Though it makes few attempts at gaining proselytes, yet, on the other hand, it watches over the opinions of its own flock with rigorous jealousy, and never allows any over whom it has once obtained a hold, to shake it off. In fact, though the Greek church always assumes rather a defensive than an offensive position, yet its defence is often of such a nature as to assume the character of an attack.

A fundamental principle of the Russian church, laid down by the priests and confirmed by the state, is, that no Greek-Russian shall ever forsake his church for another. Should such an act of apostacy occur within the empire, both the proselyte and those instrumental in his conversion, will incur punishment. The religion of the Russians is so closely intertwined with their whole being, that any one abandoning his religion is regarded at the same time, as one forsaking his God, his country, his friends, and his sovereign; as a traitor, in short, to the state as well as to religion. It is very seldom, therefore, that a Russian in any country, or situation, changes the religion of his forefathers for another.

Another law of the Greek-Russian church is, that no one, of any religion, within her empire, shall be permitted to forsake his own creed for any other but the established one. She can tolerate the blindness of obstinate but sincere heresy, but any one who once takes the step of abandoning the religion in which he was brought up, is deemed inexcusable if he wilfully adopts another system of errors. Within the Russian empire, no Protestant may turn Catholic, nor *vice versâ*; and no Jew or heathen may adopt any system of Christianity, but that of the Greeks. It is also another law, that any one who has even once partaken of the sacrament from the hand of a Greek priest, shall be regarded as a convert, and compelled formally to renounce his own faith for that of the state. It often happens that a sick Lutheran or Catholic in the interior of Russia, unable to obtain the assistance of a priest of his own church, will accept the offices of religion from a Greek, and is then compelled, if he recover, to declare himself of that church. Among the thousands of Lutherans, Finns, Esthonians, Lettes, and Germans in the Russian army, dispersed as that army is over the face of the vast empire, many are obliged for years together to abstain from the consolation of the sacrament, unless they are



willing to receive it from the hands of a Russian priest. Compelled as they are to join in many of the church ceremonies, they are often tempted to receive the sacrament likewise, after which the law refuses to recognise them in any other character than as members of the Greek church.

The laws most offensive to the Protestants of the Baltic provinces, however, are those which treat of mixed marriages. The Greek church decrees, that the children of any marriage, of which either husband or wife is Russian, shall all be educated as Russians. No mixed marriages can be sanctified by any but Greek priests. A marriage of this kind, performed by a Lutheran priest, is not regarded as a marriage at all; neither the wife nor the children can take the name or inherit the fortune of the husband and father.

It would seem that these laws concerning mixed marriages, are alone sufficient gradually to root out Protestantism in the Baltic provinces. Marriages between Germans and Russians are very frequent, because the Germans, a people of greater physical beauty and mental cultivation than the Russians, are constantly sought in marriage by those superior to them in rank and wealth. A Russian officer, magistrate, or merchant in the Baltic provinces, will generally consider himself fortunate to be able to obtain the hand of a poor but pretty German girl; and the German who emigrates to Russia as a physician, a soldier, &c., finds so many high-born Russian heiresses, willing to bestow hand, heart, and fortune, on the stranger, that in general he is apt to reject the less advantageous matches offered him in his own country, and to consent that his children shall be taught to cross themselves and worship the saints.

The Greek religion is so interwoven with the whole being of the Russians, that to adopt it is, in fact, to become a Russian. The gradual amalgamation of the two races is, therefore, promoted by these laws concerning mixed marriages. Many of the most distinguished families of the Baltic provinces have thus become Russian, or at least Russian branches of the family have been formed. There are Russian and German Engelhardtts, Russian and German Vietinghöfe, &c., and many estates in the Baltic provinces have, in the same way, passed into the hands of Russian families.

On the other hand circumstances are not wanting that tend powerfully to counteract this tendency. A Russian must offer very great advantages before a German lady will consent to become his wife. The Germans believe that there is not so much domestic happiness and affection to be found in a Russian as in a German family, and a German father, therefore, is with difficulty brought to give his daughter's hand to a Russian. The mass of prosperous and wealthy Germans will always intermarry with prosperous and wealthy Germans, and only the portionless daughters and younger sons ally themselves to the Russians. Some classes of society, such as the German merchants in the cities, and the Lutheran pastors in the country, never intermarry with Russians, and preserve their religion and nationality unadulterated.

The Russians also, who marry Germans, seldom establish themselves in the Baltic provinces, where they feel themselves excelled by the superior cultivation and enlightenment of the Germans, and rendered uncomfortable by the peculiarities of their national character; they generally sell their estates there, or make them over to their German relatives, and settle in the interior of Russia.

The Russian government has lately installed a Greek bishop at Riga,

to watch over the interests of the Greek church, and to secure its unity and dignity in the Baltic provinces. The installation of this bishop is a source of great disquietude and anger to the Lutherans. The Russian church has, in consequence of this appointment, acquired an organized character in the German provinces, and is enabled to assume a much more formidable attitude in its encroachments upon Lutheranism. In short, Lutheranism in Russia does not gain proselytes, and is constantly losing some of its members by acts of apostacy; but it makes up, in some measure, for this loss by the German immigrants who arrive from abroad, and it has other sources of increase, so that its decline, at worst, is very slow and gradual.

#### THE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE OF GERMANY AND RUSSIA.

In the Baltic provinces, the Russian language is spoken exclusively by all Russians; for these people cling to their language as tenaciously as to their religion and costume, and as the Germans, Lettes, and Esthonians, who have dealings with them, generally learn their language, they seldom speak any other. All Germans who enter the Russian army as officers, are compelled to give testimonials of their proficiency in the Russian language before they can receive their commissions. All public officers, all German teachers, professors, and even clergymen, are required to be acquainted with the Russian language, and no student is received either at Dorpat or in the Russian universities, who is unacquainted with it. The attainment of this knowledge is, however, sometimes no easy matter, for teachers of Russian are scarce in the Baltic provinces, and German families often think themselves fortunate if they can catch an invalid Russian officer, or a disbanded soldier, who is able and willing to teach their children Russian.

If the Russian government rightly understood its own interests, it would be very far from endeavouring, as it now does by every means in its power, to *un-Germanize* these countries. Russia owes almost every thing to Germany, and should think herself happy to have obtained a little piece of Germany for her own, whence, as from a flourishing plantation, she may transplant German virtues and German talents into her own more sterile soil. But if Russia continues to treat German nationality as she does that of the Tartars and Tungusians, the springs from which flow her best statesmen, generals, teachers, and citizens, will soon be dried up. Fortunately the Russian endeavours have as yet effected but little. The highest men of the land still are obliged to employ Russian translators in their intercourse with the authorities of Russia; very few of the merchants of Riga, Reval, &c., have mastered the Russian language, and are always for this reason anxious to have Russian clerks in their service. The independent nobles and their ladies rarely know any thing of Russian, and when a Russian officer enters a room full of company, in Courland or Livonia, the first question generally is—“*Verstehen sie Deutsch?*” or “*Est-ce que vous parlez Français?*” And when, as often happens, this is answered by a silent shake of the head, the conversation is carried on by signs or interpreters. In a literary point of view, the Baltic provinces are still thoroughly German. Schiller, Goethe, Wieland, Herder, and Schlegel, are here, as in Swabia and in Saxony, the beloved and

honoured objects of the highest reverence. The newspapers and literary journals published at Dorpat, Riga, Reval, Mitau, and Libau, are all printed in German, with the exception of one or two, written expressly for the peasants, in Lettish or Esthonian. All the books printed in the country, theological, scientific, economical, &c., are in German; and it is calculated, that in Leipzig itself, more Russian is printed, than in all the Baltic provinces put together.

No city in Germany can be more fervent in its admiration of Schiller and Goethe, than Riga. Schlegel, Tieck, Platen, Müller, Rückert, &c., have all their disciples and admirers here; nay, the very poverty of the country itself in literary merit seems to render it more alive to that of the mother-country. In fact, a German will feel himself quite at home in the Baltic provinces, in the two most important points of language and literature. The more cultivated inhabitants are content if they know enough Russian to get on with the Russian postilions and boatmen, and seldom amuse themselves in their leisure hours with other books than those of French and German authors. The works of Pushkin, Derzhavin, Kruiloff, Karamsin, &c., are less known than in many parts of Germany.

Such, as far as I have been able correctly to portray it, is the situation of our German brethren on the shores of the Baltic. German in language, manners, literature, religion, and institutions; German in heart and soul, they are yet threatened with the slow but regular loss of nationality, by the encroachment of the Slavonian race. In Courland it is that the least progress has hitherto been made in this respect: in Esthonia the advances have been the most striking. It will, however, proceed very slowly, more slowly in the towns even than among the nobles, because the situation of a German nobleman in the Baltic provinces much more nearly resembles that of a Russian "*Pamäshstshik*," than the position of a citizen there does that of a Russian "*Mäshtshanin*." Long may we be able to sympathize with them as our countrymen, and long may they remain a part, if not of the great German league, at least of the great German family of nations!



## SOUTHERN RUSSIA AND THE CRIMEA.

### POLTAVA.

IT was in the beginning of May, in the year 1838, that I commenced *my* excursion into the Steppes of southern Russia, from the celebrated city of Poltava, where the most adventurous king of modern times, about a century ago, concluded *his*. Accident had there made me acquainted with a very interesting young Russian whose route also lay through the steppes, and with whom, in a handsome britshka with three horses, I now drove down the high bank of the Vorskla just as the sun was rising over the battle-field enveloped in gloomy clouds as it formerly set on the King of Sweden.

I could hardly have desired a better travelling companion than the one now accidentally offered to me, who had wandered over the steppes from Hungary to China, but I might easily have met with better weather. I could scarcely have thought it possible that in the latitude of Paris, the gentle May could bring forth such a wintry storm as now rushed towards us on the wings of the wild east wind, drifting snow and rain with such violence that we had reason to rejoice that we were still wrapped in our warm furs, and had not trusted too implicitly the promises of some passing April days. As the snow melted, the road became very deep; and in spite of our new britshka and excellent horses, we got on but slowly through the rich heavy dry soil of the steppe in which Charles XII.'s cannon once stuck fast. Every object was enveloped in fog and snow-drift, so that by the time we reached the first station we had added but little to the stock of our knowledge of Southern Russia.

The only object, indeed, which we could see at all clearly was our *yamtshik*, or postilion; and this was one by no means unworthy of observation, for the Russian is as humorous, obliging, and entertaining, as our German postillion is wilful, commonplace, and tedious. A series of portraits of the *yamtshiks* from Poltava to Odessa, with a commentary descriptive of their peculiar voices, their original answers, their soliloquies, and conversations with their horses, their whips, their carriages and harness, in short, with all things animate and inanimate that surrounded them, really form an interesting gallery.

Most admirable is the patience with which these people endure every kind of weather. Thus during the pitiless snow-storm which accompanied us to the second station, our *yamtshik*, a little short thick roguish-looking fellow, had nothing to cover him but his inexpressibles and a red cotton shirt, the two garments being fastened together by a girdle. The brim of his hat was torn off all round, with the exception of an inch or two on one

side which still held together. This small flap he carefully pulled down on the side next the wind, and this was his only protection from the severity of the weather. He uttered not a syllable of complaint, however, but kept pouring forth, as if from an inexhaustible spring, a shower of witticisms, and for all the amusement he afforded us, as well as the hardships he underwent, was more than content with a *douceur* of thirty kopeks.

The admirable wisdom of Nature in having peopled this rough inhospitable country with so patient, contented, and tough a nation as the Russians, struck us most forcibly on arriving at the third station where we stopped to dine. We there met with a *Feldjäger*, or courier, coming from Odessa, who told us that he was compelled to make the journey to St. Petersburg, of 200 German miles (850 English) in four days. He was clothed from head to foot in leather, and thus tolerably protected from the weather, but the intolerable jolting of his most inconvenient equipage had thrown him into a perfect fever. He stated that during the first few days of these courier journeys, so full of fatigue and hardship, this sort of travelling fever usually occurred, but that it passed off by the third or fourth night. These Russian *Feldjägers*, who are constantly sent about into all parts of this immense empire, with all sorts of commissions and messages, certainly make the longest journeys in the world in the most inconvenient manner. A certain number of them are appointed for the emperor, the empress, the heir to the throne, and the different ministers, and they often perform from fifty to sixty German miles a day for ten or twelve days together, in carriages that we should find uncomfortable for an afternoon's drive. Very few of them, however, can support this kind of life for a long period, although the strongest men are of course selected for such a service. Those who have managed to become accustomed to it are extremely well paid, and have many opportunities of pocketing considerable sums of money.

The adjutants and officers appointed to the governors and commandants of provinces must be equally capable of enduring these fatigues, and the amount of health continually sacrificed on these endless Russian roads is almost incredible. These travellers often arrive at the stations so benumbed with cold and so exhausted and worn out, for want of sleep, that it is necessary to lift them from their carriages.

On arriving at Reshitilovka we found, to our sorrow, that it was a fast-day, and we could not, therefore, expect that the dinner would make amends for the weather. We were presented with a tureen full of lukewarm water, in which pieces of cabbage and cucumber were floating; a fish covered with lamp-oil sauce; and something, by way of dessert, that resembled *papier-maché*. To make the matter worse, when the hostess observed that we did not attack these viands with great eagerness, she remarked that "perhaps there was not sugar enough" to the cakes, and crumbled a handful over them with her fingers. We had been but little tempted before; after this operation, however, we could eat nothing at all, but a glass of "*schnaps*" in Russia helps one to digest all manner of vexations.

The town of Reshitilovka, renowned far and wide for certain silky black lamb skins, said to be quite peculiar to the place, is like all the towns in this part of the country, nearly as extensive as a province. It contains, I was informed, not less than 11,000 inhabitants, 2000 serfs, and the rest *kasakki*, or freemen, that is to say, nobles and Jews. About one-half of

these serfs belong to one great nobleman, and the rest are distributed in parcels of ten, three, or even two, among small proprietors, who live scattered about amongst the peasants in the villages. A town of this sort with us would be content with one church, but here there are no less than six, and an astonishing number of windmills surround the place, like a besieging army.

The population in Poltava is more dense than in any other government of Russia, as there are almost 2000 persons to every (German) square mile, and in no other do we find it so much concentrated on a few points, a circumstance accounted for by this part of the country having been formerly much exposed to the incursions of the Tartars, so that the inhabitants were compelled to keep together for mutual defence.

In reading the history of Charles XII. we are apt to figure to ourselves this district as a naked steppe, without a tree or a shrub; but such would be a very mistaken notion, for the landscape is still variegated by pleasant woods, and can only be regarded as the frontier-land of the true steppe, which does not begin till we arrive on the other side of the Dnieper. In the Ukraine the landscape is still varied and pleasing. The valleys of the larger and smaller rivers are often extremely beautiful, presenting fine meadows, broken by rich forests of oaks and wild fruit trees; and, though the traveller may be reminded, by a multitude of appearances, that he is approaching the wild wastes of the steppes, he is not the less made to feel, by a succession of varied objects, that he has not yet entered upon the vast naked plains that go by that name, and which the Russian designates by the expressive appellation of the *nastayashtshoi* step, or the veritable steppe.

"He, he, garkaya!" (bitter one!) "noo, noo, popi!" (now, you little popes!) "shevelitsa!" (shake yourselves!) "beregitsa!" (mind what you're about!) "noo, noo, rasom!" (now, all three together!) "po gooro, po gooro! po gorutshkoo!" (up the hill, up the hill, up the little hill!) "Come, don't be afraid! What are you stumbling for? Are you blind?" "Yukhti, varvari!" (gee up, you barbarians!)—In these and similar terms our postilion continued incessantly to discourse with his horses, and, by the aid of his unwearied coaxings and scoldings, we at last arrived, towards evening, in the eminent city of Krementshug, on the banks of the Dnieper. *Samovar postavit!* (on with the tea-kettle!) is a word of command which the traveller, who arrives half-frozen at a Russian post-station, rarely fails to thunder forth from his carriage-window; nor did we fail to make it our first salutation to the Israelite host that hastened out to receive us.

## KREMENTSHUG.

The first thing I saw in Krementshug was a Jew, and the second a goat, which came leaping along the road. The Jew is the same in all zones and climates, but the goat of the steppes is far inferior in animation, agility, and cunning to our mountaineers, although it is still considered to rank so far above the sheep, that the shepherds declare they can keep no flock of sheep together without mingling a number of goats with them, to qualify their stupidity. Their short legs and clumsy movements, however, and the long hair, which hangs all round them, give them rather the appearance of polar bears than of the sprightly race that bound about amongst



our hills and rocks. One might as well expect an ox to skip from crag to crag, as one of these heavy goats of the steppe.

Like almost all the towns of South Russia, Krementshug is new and prosperous, and partakes, with Odessa, of the advantages of the increasing trade of the Black Sea; but, though it has some considerable buildings, the stone quarries in the vicinity produce no stone fit for paving, and the inhabitants have not yet learned to employ their granite reefs for this purpose.

They have little of the speculative spirit of the natives of Great Russia, and are mostly devoted to agriculture and cattle-breeding. Krementshug (a name which signifies "the city of fire-stones") is the principal post for the whole government of Poltava, which furnishes itself here with many articles from the Crimea and Bessarabia as well as with those of the Levant coming by Odessa, and with the productions of the Polish forests, which come down the Dnieper.

Notwithstanding the advantage of the river, however, the exports are next to nothing. Only when the price of corn rises very high in Odessa, does a small quantity of wheat find its way from Krementshug; but, in general, it is all consumed in the country, either in the form of bread or of spirits. Wool, honey, and flax are commonly the only articles of exportation.

Nature has unfortunately committed the mistake of impeding the navigation of the broad deep and beautiful river Dnieper, by crossing it at the lower part of its course, with diagonal rocky reefs. These reefs, by hindering the navigation, had also served as so many stations for retiring barbarism, as lately in the case of the "Cossacks of the Waterfalls," as they were called. Had these waterfalls not existed, who can tell how far the trade and civilization of ancient Greece might not have spread along the Dnieper, or what resistance this country might not have offered to the invasion of the northern tribes. During the last fifty years, indeed, great efforts have been made by the various governments to remove the obstacles presented to the navigation of the river by these reefs; and to their exertions, as well as to the general improvement that has taken place in southern Russia, may we attribute the fact, that the trade of the Dnieper has tripled and quadrupled within that period.

During our evening's walk we saw several new houses in the course of erection, the usual symptom of a thriving community. We had not, however, the satisfaction to perceive in our inn any indication of the prosperity and abundance said to prevail in Krementshug, for our excellent travelling appetites were forced to be satisfied with tea and some little meat patties (*pirogas*) which we had brought with us from Poltava. We asked for eggs—"Directly, directly," was the answer; "but—but they are not quite fresh." Not being quite fresh signified, we found, that they were already inhabited by young chickens. We begged for some milk. "Yes, yes, certainly," and then came an inquisition into the case. "Ah! we had plenty—but—" "Well then give us some cold meat, or some chops." "Oh! dear, our chops were all eaten yesterday—we had such nice ones!"

We were forced to console ourselves, as well as we could, with the idea that it is the private hospitality of Krementshug which stands in the way of the prosperity of its inns, and wrapping ourselves in our bearskins, we

slept till the following morning, when we started forth to cross the Dnieper.

As the river at this point has received all its important tributaries (for the Bug cannot well be counted among them), it contains a great mass of water, and its breadth is reckoned at 1700 ells. The direction of its course from north to south occasions it to rise very late in the spring, for the streams which feed it from the north do not thaw till the end of April, or the beginning of May. To this circumstance it owes another great advantage,—namely, that the rise is not so great as if the river ran in an opposite direction, for as the warm weather arrives first at the mouth, it thaws the ice there, and opens the gate, and then proceeding gradually upwards, the loosening and dissolving masses of snow and ice find always a free channel for their course. If a river flows from east to west, or from west to east, it usually thaws all at once; and if from south to north, we must always expect frequent obstructions to the current; for the freed waters rushing towards the mouth will often find there an insurmountable barrier of ice, when the ice and snow about the sources have long since yielded to the influence of the spring. This, for instance, is the case of the Dwina.

We had scarcely pushed off from the shore when I observed a sort of whirlpool in the water, beneath which lay something black, and before I had time to say, "What is that?" we had stuck fast on the point of a granite rock. The boat fell over on her side, some of our horses went overboard, and as they were tied fast they almost dragged the boat after them before the cords could be cut. The noise and confusion were, of course, great. A crowd of spectators were standing on the shore without offering to come to our assistance, and I created much merriment unwittingly by calling out "*Daitye loshku*," that is to say, "Bring us a spoon," instead of "*lotku*," meaning a boat. Although it seemed not unlikely that this would be the last lesson in the Russian language I should ever receive, it was impossible to help joining in the laugh raised at my expense.

The Dnieper, like all the great steppe rivers, flows very rapidly, though not so much so as the Bug, the Dniester, and the Pruth, the last being the most rapid of all. This rapidity is very remarkable, for the declivity of the steppes is, on the whole, very slight, and the small tributary rivers flow so slowly as almost to stagnate during the greater part of the year.

Opposite to Krementshug, on the other side of the Dnieper, lies a little place called Kriukoff, which serves as a storehouse to the former, No article is found in it in greater abundance than salt, for here are the great government magazines from which nearly all the country round is supplied. This salt is furnished partly from the lakes of the Crimean Steppe, and partly from the shores of the Euxine, from which and from the *Limans* of Bessarabia, enormous quantities are procured. On the Volga are found similar, but still more considerable, depots of this article. The northern provinces on the Baltic—the territory of the Dwina, &c.—receive their salt principally from Norway, and to Poland it is brought mostly from the Carpathian mountains. The annual exportation of salt from Kriukoff amounts on an average to about 25,000,000 lbs.

It is curious to find what enormous distances very insignificant goods have often to be conveyed in this vast country. Throughout the whole

wide woodless region of the south, no tar can be produced, but it is brought in immense quantities down the Dnieper from the Polish forests, and distributed over the Ukraine and the steppes, where there is often a great want of the article. In its absence fat bacon is often used as a substitute for greasing the wheels, and we have more than once purchased from a waggoner, for this purpose, a lump that he was just going to eat for his breakfast. The dogs seem to be aware of the custom, for whenever a travelling-carriage stops at a post-station, a whole pack of dogs often gather around to amuse themselves by licking the axletrees of the wheels.

#### THE STEPPES OF NEW RUSSIA.

On crossing the Dnieper we soon became sensible that we had entered a new country, as, indeed, a traveller mostly does after crossing a large river. Nothing like a wood of the least extent was any longer to be seen, but only here and there on the distant horizon groups of small trees, and after passing Yelisabethgrad, the complete naked steppe lay spread out before us in all its dreariness and desolation.

For the population of this country of New Russia (a name by the by which exists only in our geographies) the Russian government has scraped together fragments from half the nations of Europe, besides offering an asylum to the Jews, and forcing Gipsies and Tartars, both equally averse to the labours of the field, to assist in forming the agricultural colonies. Large tracts of land have been granted to the German, Hungarian, and Bulgarian colonists, and estates have been given to the Russian and Polish nobles on condition of bringing them into cultivation. In some places sanctuaries have even been created, where runaway serfs from the interior of Russia or Poland may settle as freemen.

The main body of the population is, however, everywhere Malorossian. This interesting race of men has of late years spread itself out in a manner deserving of much more notice than it has generally received. The native region of the Malorossians is in the governments of Kieff, Poltava, and Tshernigoff, stretching along to the Carpathian mountains, where a branch of them, the Rusnaki, are found living under the Austrian sceptre. Of late years this race of agriculturists has spread itself over New Russia to the shores of the Black Sea, to Moldavia, the Crimea and the Caucasus.

In Alexandria was a coffeehouse kept by a Jew, and his pretty daughter made us our coffee. We complimented her on her bright eyes and pearly teeth, but she seemed to attach much less value to these natural jewels than to a splendid cap embroidered with pearls, which she wore upon her head. All the Jewesses in New Russia and in Little Russia, as far as Galicia, wear a huge, stiff, and very unbecoming cap, of which the foundation is usually of black velvet, over which is formed a complete network of pearls, and this ornament they call *mushka*. With rich and poor, the *mushka* is always nearly the same in form, the only difference being the greater or less value of the pearls, and occasionally of other precious stones attached to it. A girl in this way often carries half her fortune on her head, for these caps are generally worth from 500 to 1000 rubles, and some of them are even valued at five or six thousand. The *mushka* is worn alike on holidays and working-days, in the kitchen as on the promenade, and the head is often seen resplendent with pearls, when



all the rest of the costume consists of mere rags. This fashion gives rise to a very extensive trade in pearls at Odessa, Taganrog, and other ports of the Black Sea. Within the geographical limits of the *mushka* there are supposed to be about two millions of Jews. Now supposing that among them there are only 300,000 adult women, and that only half of these wear *mushkas*, though, in point of fact none but the very poorest and the few that affect an aristocratic tone, are ever to be seen without the distinguishing ornament, and supposing that, on an average, each is only worth 500 rubles, this calculation alone will give us a capital of 76,000,000 rubles invested in the caps of the Jewesses of this part of the world.

It was a beautiful evening on which we crossed the steppe between Alexandria and Yelisabethpol, and the scene was certainly any thing but lifeless and desolate. The crocuses, hyacinths, tulips, and other flowers which make their appearance immediately after the melting of the snow, had indeed, already withered, but the grass was deliciously green and fresh, and all teeming with animal life.

The lovely little spotted *susliks*, or *Erdhäschen* (earth-hares), as they are called by the German colonists, sprang about and diverted us with their various odd gestures; small birds were everywhere to be seen, eagles and vultures were floating high in the air; pigeons were cooing around on every side, and the stately *demoiselles de Numidie* were hopping to and fro like so many young ladies engaged in the execution of a quadrille. One, disposed to look with interest on all these varied crowds of animal life, had little cause to complain of monotony or weariness on the steppes. In addition, moreover, to all these elegant little animals, we met in the military colony of Petrikova,\* a dandy from Odessa, who favoured us with a budget of the fashionable chit-chat of that city, while he diverted himself by eating up, in a most unconscionable manner, six of the meat patties we had brought from Poltava; whereas my companion and I were wont to divide one between us. To eat six of our little patties at once, was a more formidable attack on our larder on the naked steppe than if in a great town he had devoured six sirloins of beef at our cost.

The military colonies of South Russia, which furnish the cavalry with both men and horses, contain about 60,000 men. Their villages are very regularly built, all on the same plan, the streets planted with rows of trees, the houses of officers as well as soldiers, simple, but extremely clean, containing nothing more than what is strictly necessary. The dwellings of the generals and superior officers are sometimes oddly contrasted with the pomp of their high-sounding titles, and there is no doubt that in the midst of the inconveniences and privations to which they are subjected, the younger of them often look back with fond regret to the ball-rooms of Moscow and St. Petersburg, but it is interesting and curious to see hussars and cuirassiers in full uniform, with their sabres at their sides, labouring behind the plough or driving their wild herds over the grassy steppes;—the sons of wild Mars engaged in the service of the gentle Ceres.

We reached that evening the town of Yelisabethgrad, the largest and most important of the whole district, and containing above 12,000 inha-

\* This place continues in most of our maps to be designated by the name of Petrikova, but in point of fact, since the last Polish war it has received the name of Novaya Praga (New Praga), in consequence of the bravery displayed at the taking of Praga by the regiment of cuirassiers belonging to this colony.

bitants. It is difficult to conjecture the cause of this superiority, for it lies like the rest in the midst of the grass, and possesses no one feature—neither river nor lake, nor mountain which can be supposed to have served to attract the nucleus of a settlement. It appears to be a mere creation of chance and arbitrary power. The Ingul, which flows slowly past it, is the most melancholy and lifeless of all the rivers of the steppe; its silent surface is enlivened by no kind of craft, nay not so much as by floating rafts of timber. The town is not a government town; the magistrates, indeed, of the circle and of the military colonies reside there, but it can hardly be that these are sufficient to afford subsistence to a large town.

In the neighbourhood of Yelisabethgrad are several German colonies which thrive and fatten visibly in the steppe, and yield every year a number of superfluous young people, who find employment in the neighbouring towns as mechanics, innkeepers, &c. Such a German innkeeper it was who that night entertained us with an excellent supper and good beds.

On the following morning, when only a few lights were visible here and there in the houses, our vehicle was again rolling over the steppe. After leaving Yelisabethgrad behind us, we saw for the first time the brittle limestone which lies everywhere beneath the mould and clay of the steppe, and forms the principal building material from this part of the country to the shores of the Euxine, wood being excessively scarce. This stone is so soft and crumbly, that it can be worked like wood with the saw and hatchet, being indeed nothing more than a conglomerate of shells kept together by a very feeble cement. It is usually cut into blocks of two and a half feet long, by one foot broad and deep, and with these blocks are built the towns of Odessa, Nikolayeff, the villages of the German colonists, and all those in short which do not consist, like the abodes of the Little Russians, Moldavians, and Bulgarians, merely of mud hovels, or holes dug in the ground. Enclosures and gateways, as well as the bridges, alas! are all made with this stone, and in some respects it is certainly a convenient material, since it is easy to build with it a magnificent house with columns and architraves, and all kinds of decorations, which look very well as long as they are new. Its beauty, however, is of very short duration, for the stone in reality is a most wretched material for building, being so soft that one can make a mark on it with a nail, or bore a hole in it with a stick, and so porous that it sucks in moisture like a sponge, and lets in the wind through walls three or four feet thick. Of course all edifices constructed with it go rapidly to decay, and the steppe villages and towns are covered with new ruins. Most of the houses are falling to pieces, the enclosures tumbling about, and the bridges in such a state that one prefers driving through the water to crossing them. The towns of Sebastopol, Nikolayeff, and the suburbs of Odessa, are full of such ruins, and the monuments in the churchyards erected as everlasting memorials only ten years ago, look as if they had been there for centuries.

If, as is probable, the ancient Greeks made use of this stone in the erection of their towns of Olbia, Cherson, Odessus, &c., it is not surprising that some of them have vanished so completely as not to leave a trace behind, and that others have left only the most insignificant fragments. For the Russians, who are so fond of having things quickly finished, this stone is of course quite a godsend.

From Yelisabethgrad to Nikolayeff there is nothing that deserves the

name of a town—only little villages and post-stations. The fertility of the country also decreases as we approach the Black Sea, for though the soil is as rich and deep as ever, the entire nakedness of the ground is unfavourable both to the garden and the field, and adapt it only for pasturage. In the immediate vicinity of Odessa and the other large towns, indeed, large tracts are kept under the plough, but this is simply owing to the demand created by those towns; the real granaries of Odessa are in Bessarabia, Podolia, and Little Russia.

This whole region, it cannot be denied, must be most tedious to travellers in general, but I cannot say that, for my own part, I experienced much of this weariness. The mere consciousness of finding myself at last veritably on the genuine steppes, those immeasurable grassy fields, where, for hundreds of miles, no break occurs in the uniformity of the verdant ocean, where a calf that began to graze at the Carpathian mountains, might eat its way to the wall of China, and arrive there a full-grown ox—this mere consciousness, I say, occupied my imagination so much as to exclude all thought of ennui. The mighty movements of nations that have taken place here in past ages, the singular lives of its present inhabitants, their vast herds of cattle and horses, their countless flocks of fat-tailed sheep, the apparent boundlessness of the steppe, nay the very rapidity of our own movement, sufficed to keep off any thing like a feeling of weariness, although it must be confessed, the extreme uniformity of the scene made us feel as if we were rolling round on a tread-mill, and were never really stirring from the spot.

Many optical illusions also take place which contribute not a little to the amusement of the traveller. One often sees an ox or some wandering figure of a man on the distant horizon, magnified to a gigantic size, and appearing to move on stilts or hover in the air. Sometimes a dark object like a haystack would appear to change its place, and to increase or diminish, so that we could not make out what it was. The appearances of lakes and great waters were so deceptive, that we could hardly persuade ourselves not to trust to them, especially as the legs of the cattle disappeared, as if they had been wading in water. The cattle themselves, however, it is said, are never deceived in this way, but can always distinguish real water by the smell.

At those stations where the villages were *panski*, i.e. the property of one landlord, we were always sure to see a quantity of fine large greyhounds. They are called *barsi*, and are almost the only dogs used for sporting on the steppe, where a good eye is of far more importance than a quick scent. The rich lords of the steppe, it is true, keep other dogs, and sometimes carry on their hunting expeditions on a very large scale. One gentleman, of the name of Skarzinski, who owns a chateau near Vosnessensk, is in the habit of inviting, every season, some twenty or thirty of his friends, together with all their servants and attendants, to a grand hunting-party. When he sallies forth with his guests, twenty-five camels are put in requisition to carry tents, cooking-apparatus, wine-casks, and various other articles calculated to contribute to the comfort and enjoyment of the little sporting caravan. An orchestra of perhaps thirty performers is engaged to enchant the modish Nimrods after the fatigues of a day's pleasure, and some two or three hundred peasants, huntsmen, and servants, accompany the expedition. During the day, Skarzinski and his companions scour the plain. Towards evening they seek their tents,



where a sumptuous banquet has been provided for them, and a portion of the night is spent in drinking champagne, and playing cards, or in listening to the harmonious strains of the band. In this way they hunt and feast their way to a place called Beisbeirak, near Elisabethgorod, where there exists a plain of some extent covered with brushwood, that serves as a cover for vast numbers of wolves, foxes, and hares. To this point other sporting caravans are likewise wont to direct their course. On their arrival they join their forces to those of Skarzinski, and after a few weeks spent in hunting and carousing, the season is closed by a grand festival.

The wolf-chase on the steppes is quite peculiar in its way. A thicket in which wolves are supposed to lie concealed, is surrounded by nets. In front of these nets the hunters station themselves with their fowling-pieces, and behind them stand the peasants with spears and pitchforks. The drivers and dogs then enter the thicket to scare the wolves into the plain, and this they do with a cry which I could easily imitate (for the sound is one never to be forgotten), but which it would be vain for me to attempt to describe. Those wolves that escape the tubes of the hunters, entangle themselves in the nets, where they are speared and pitchforked by the peasants, and sometimes taken alive. The genuine Cossack of the steppe, however, uses neither musket nor pitchfork, but mounted on his trusty steed, depends only on his well plaited *nagaika* or whip, with which he rarely fails to cut down a wolf, as with a sabre.

We found so many subjects of inquiry at all the stations, that we proceeded very slowly, notwithstanding the excellence of the roads, and only arrived towards evening at the village of Gromokleyanla. These roads are in their best condition in the months of April and May; for in the summer there rises from the ground a dust so fine and light, that it hangs suspended in the air, even when not a breath of wind is stirring. The colour of this dust is nearly black, so that the traveller is soon metamorphosed by it into a negro. In the beginning of the spring, on the melting of the snow, the steppe is absolutely pathless and impassable, for the whole of its deep rich soil is changed into a tough miry paste. Art has done but little for these roads, no more indeed than marking their limits by digging small ditches at the distance of thirty-six fathoms. Beside this, on the great roads, small stone-pyramids have been erected at certain distances, to mark the way which would otherwise be entirely lost in winter.

So imposing a breadth is given to these roads, on account of the great herds of cattle which pass through them to the slaughter-houses of Moscow and Petersburg, and to the great *Salgans* (establishments for the boiling of tallow) at Odessa, Kherson, and Taganrog. The road serves at the same time as a pasture-ground, the cattle eating their way as they go along. The trading caravans which travel to and from the Black Sea, also camp out upon these roads, where they require no other roof to cover them, than that which nature has provided for them, namely, the vault of heaven. Towards evening we often saw on the road to Odessa the fires of many of these caravans. They mostly consist of from 30 to 40 waggons drawn by oxen, under the guidance of an upper *Tshumah*, and his men, but I have sometimes seen a line of from 300 to 400.

We took some pains to inquire into the movements of the caravans which move between the Dniester and the Volga, and from Kieff to the Euxine, and form the principal element of life on these roads of the

steppe. Wherever we saw their fires, or met with Tshumaks eating their *borsht* (their national soup) we stopped and entered into conversation with them.

In summer and in good weather their course of life is as follows:—At two or three in the morning, as soon as the cock crows,—who is an invariable occupant of the leading waggon, serving at the same time as clock and weather-prophet,—the Tshumaks prepare for departure, catch the oxen which have been set at liberty to graze during the night, harness them once more, and plod away for eight or nine hours in a very leisurely manner, till they come to a spot where there is good water and pasture. Some of the men then set the cattle free again, whilst others occupy themselves in making a fire, collecting for this purpose, like the leaders of caravans in Africa, dung dried in the sun, hay and straw, or the small fragments of broken wheels, carefully put aside for this purpose. The fire soon crackles as merrily under the kettle as in the woody regions of Poland, and the millet porridge, or *borsht*, (the only dishes ever served upon their tables, whether at breakfast, dinner, or supper,) is quickly warmed. Their sound and unsophisticated teeth successfully attack the hard, coarse bread, called *sukhari*, which they bring with them from home, and, as soon as their rude meal is ended, they set out again upon their journey. In the afternoon the oxen are again allowed a short rest, and the third and last halt is made at sunset. They then form their waggons into a regular parallelogram upon the broad road, generally eight or ten long, and five or six broad, with room, enough to pass conveniently and mend whatever is broken or out of order. The social fire once more flames up, the "*sukhari*" are once more crunched, the broth is drunk, and then they all lie down to the sound of a melancholy night-song, in a minor key, which dies away on the echoless steppe as the Tshumaks fall asleep on the grass. At sunrise again the crowing of the cock sets all in motion, to recommence the never-changing routine of the day.

It is singular that in rainy weather the skins of the oxen become sore in drawing, so that the caravans cannot proceed, but are obliged to wait quietly till the rain is over. In this way their business is sometimes interrupted for several days. The regular, and comparatively wealthy Tshumaks only travel from Easter to October, as after that period the violent snow-storms render the journeys very hazardous. Throughout the whole of Southern Russia the summer is the principal time for trade and commercial intercourse. In the north, exactly the contrary takes place; for, throughout the lands bordering on the Baltic ports, the most important trade is carried on in the winter, along the fine paths formed by the hard snow.

The poorer Tshumaks, who are compelled to risk the accidents of winter journeys, have a much harder life, and often perish on the road. I myself, whilst travelling in the Ukraine, shortly after the melting of the snow, saw, dug out of a ravine, several broken sledges, and the remains of oxen and Tshumaks, which had lain there for five months. These poor people suffer almost as much in winter on the shores of the Black Sea, on the dreary, inhospitable steppe, as Captain Ross did at the North Pole.

As the night was clear and beautiful, we preferred going on in our little swift britshka to stopping on the road. It looked, it is true, more like a stalactite cave than a carriage, for it was crusted over and over with the tough mud of the Poltava district, and decorated all round with dry

pendant drops; but we slept very comfortably in it, notwithstanding, and made considerable progress in our route.

When I awoke in the morning, I saw my travelling companion sitting forward in the carriage, holding in his hand a pistol ready cocked. On my inquiring the cause of this unexpected movement, he replied that the yamtshiks all round Nikolayeff were known to be the greatest rascals in the world, and he had no good opinion of our present one. "The fellow stops every moment," said he, "and pretends to have something to do to the horses, while he leers round on the steppe, as if he expected somebody. I have been obliged to call to him every minute not to drive so near the ditches. It is a common trick with them to upset a carriage, to give their comrades time to come up." I thought it as well to keep a sharp eye on the rascal, and so took out my pistol also, whilst my companion occasionally enforced his commands with a good hard whack, which the postilion took as quietly as if he knew he deserved it. Nowhere, in fact, does opportunity make more robbers and murderers than in Russia. Drive him with a tight rein, and you may do what you will with a Russian; but, if you nod behind his back, his head is apt to get full of all sorts of wicked notions. A few blows brought our postilion into the best humour. He not only mended his pace, but began to encourage his horses with the wonted eloquence of his tribe, whereas he had previously been quite silent and sulky.

At the last station, before our arrival at Nikolayeff, we found no horses, and had to wait while men were sent out to catch some. We availed ourselves of the interval to visit Adyamka, an adjoining military colony of lancers. The men lived like genuine Troglodites, in houses dug in the earth, but for their horses a very handsome range of stables had been erected. An imperial stud was connected with the colony, and in the stud, we were assured, there were English stallions that had cost as much as 20,000 rubles. These horses are not turned out into the steppe like the others, nor were we admitted into the stables to see them.

Wood, we were told, cost here from fifty to sixty rubles the cubic *sash*.\* In Poland it may be bought for ten or twenty rubles, and at Odessa it can often not be had for eighty. Firewood is often brought to Odessa, by land-carriage, a distance of thirty German miles.

#### NIKOLAYEFF.

By breakfast-time we had reached at length the river Bug, and the town of Nikolayeff. We had been driving for some time along the bank of the river, and rejoicing with the sight of its mighty waters, our eyes long wearied of the everlasting green. The banks of this stream are high on both sides, and the beds of clay and limestone which form the steppe lie quite open to the day.

Nikolayeff, near which we saw for the first time in Russia a vineyard, has only been built about forty years, and is rather strangely chosen for the seat of the Admiralty of the Black Sea, as it is situated in the interior of the country, and vessels coming up to it must overcome the inconveniences of the entrance to the Dnieper. The true ruling point of the Black Sea is

\* A sash is equal to seven English feet.



undoubtedly Sevastopol, which lies in the midst of the regions whither orders have to be sent, and is the great arsenal of the Russian navy.

Like all Russian cities, Nikolayeff is built in a regular open manner on the flat steppe, and is full of distinguished looking buildings, so that from the river it has a very splendid effect. The town is said to contain 15,000 inhabitants.

The handsome and convenient German inn at which we put up, did not tempt me to linger there long. I soon threw myself into a droshky to take a drive round the town and visit its lions. Unfortunately for me, however, it was Sunday, and all the world was holiday-making. I could neither see the Admiralty, the Observatory, nor the Hall of Antiquities; so, after driving for some time up one street and down another, I at last found myself before the entrance of the public garden, which is laid out on a steep rising ground, overlooking the river Bug. The garden is exceedingly pretty, and when we entered, gay music was sounding from a pavilion in the centre, and half the fashionable world of Nikolayeff, Jews, Greeks, Armenians, Russians, and Germans, were enjoying its beauties.

Nikolayeff stands near the site of the ancient Olbia, which was built by the Milesians 655 years before the birth of Christ, and was unquestionably the most important commercial city of the Greeks in this part of the Pontine regions, occupying in the commercial world of those days about the same rank that Odessa occupies in ours. The spot on which Olbia stood is now called Stomogil (the hundred hills), and is the property of a Russian nobleman, Count Kusheleff-Besborodko, in whose possession are the greater part of the antiquities that have been discovered in the neighbourhood.

After crossing the river Bug, we found to our vexation that our britshka required repairs, so that it was night before we were again on the steppe. We lost little by this circumstance, as this is one of the most desolate countries that can be imagined, without a trace of a settlement of any kind, except a few miserable post-stations kept by Jews; but towards morning a cool wind blew to us from the south, and my companion awakened me and electrified me with the words, "Here's the breeze of the Black Sea!"

The arrival on the coast of a new sea is always an interesting moment to the traveller, and I waited with eager expectation, till at length we beheld its wide surface glittering in the first rays of the morning sun, and distinguished the long white line of surf on the shore, and heard with delight the rushing sound of its waves.

The first station on the sea-shore was Troitzkoye, at the mouth of the Liman of Teligul, and it was here I first became acquainted with these peculiar formations of the Black Sea, which I had afterwards ample opportunities for studying, since we passed no less than four limans between here and Odessa.

The word *Liman* is usually translated bay, lagoon, or haff, but it is far better to preserve the word itself, as the liman is distinguished; by peculiar characteristics, from the lagoons of the Adriatic, or the haffs of the Baltic.

These limans, which are found at the mouths of the smallest as well as of the largest rivers, from the Dnieper to the Danube, or rather to the Pruth, consist of basins of greater or less depth, formed by the contending waters of the sea and of the rivers. The steppe was originally a connected unbroken plateau, or terrace, in which the rivers in time wore deep furrows.

At first they probably precipitated themselves as cataracts into the sea, till, as their beds became deeper, they gradually reached the level of the sea.

It then became possible, when the sea rose high with a south or south-west wind, for it to force itself into the mouths of the rivers, and a struggle then arose between the contending waters, in which parts of the steppe were torn down, the basin enlarged, and, when the sea retired, the soil which had been washed down was again floated out.

In this manner long narrow basins were formed, the beds of which were somewhat higher than the bottom of the sea, as the deposits they contained were never entirely carried away. These were called limans, and the surf breaking on their outer limits, as on those of all bays or haffs, threw up the sand into narrow bars or dykes, on which the name of *peressip* has been bestowed, from a word signifying passage or ford. These peressips are low strips of land partly overgrown with grass, and have a singular appearance when viewed from the interior, appearing like narrow grassy banks in the middle of the water. That such has really been the course of these formations, is evident from what we see daily passing before our eyes. All these operations, the rushing in of the sea—the struggle of its waters with those of the river—the falling in of the banks—the throwing up of sand on the peressips, are daily repeated on these limans. In some of them it is true the peressips have become so high that the sea only breaks through once in ten or twenty years, but by far the greater number have a constant opening in the peressip, through which the waters rush in and out. On these openings the people of the country have bestowed the name of *gheerls*, and bridges are in some places thrown over them.

The influence of these limans on the atmosphere of the surrounding country, when their waters are not in communication with the sea, is often very unfavourable, and instances have been known, when the wind has blown in a particular direction, of whole villages falling sick in one night from the effect of the miasma emitted by the stagnant water.

Some compensation is, however, afforded for these occasional injuries, by the abundance in which they furnish one of the first necessities of life—namely salt.

The limans of the great rivers, such as the Dnieper and the Dniester contain but little, on account of the great body of fresh water poured into them, and the quantity found in the other limans varies according to the time of year, the depth, and other circumstances. The most productive are the three limans of Bessarabia, lying south-west from Odessa, and among these especially that called the *Dusle*-liman.

This liman begins to withdraw from its shores as early as June, and to deposit the salt in small crystals. Towards the end of July this deposit becomes so considerable as to reward the trouble of collecting it, and the usually desolate shores of the lake begin to be enlivened by the preparations for the salt harvest. The officers of the crown (the crown has the monopoly of salt) begin to arrive. The nobility of Podolia, Bessarabia, and New Russia, send their agents, and the German colonists and other speculators assemble, and purchase from the crown the right of collecting salt at an appointed spot. An officer of the police superintends the whole operation, and declares when the salt is what is called *ripe*; since to begin the harvest too soon, would be to lose the chance of further deposits, while to

delay it too long would be to incur the risk of having all the salt washed away by the autumn rains.\*

The whole liman is then divided by stakes as far towards the middle as possible, and each hires a portion of from ten to twenty fathoms breadth, according to his means. Near the shore the crystals are small, and lie only about from half an inch to an inch deep; further on, three or four inches; and towards the middle, a foot thick. The thickness of the bed varies, however, being greater in dry, and less in moist years. It also lies deeper towards the sea than in the shallow parts of the lake; and consequently, some places being more productive than others, there is no end of the quarrelling, disputing, and bribery employed to obtain them. The best are reserved for the crown.

The work of shovelling up and carrying away the crystallized salt is not altogether so easy as might be thought, for the salt is frequently damp, and the ground marshy, or even covered with water one or two feet deep; and besides this, the inconvenience of working in an atmosphere so saturated with salt are considerable, for the clothes and implements soon become incrustated with it, and the skin breaks and forms sores that render the people incapable of work. To avoid sinking in the marshy soil, they bind boards to their feet, on which, of course, their movements are awkward enough; but against the influence of the salt on the skin there is no remedy but that of frequent washing in fresh water, and wearing gloves, and neither of these resources are easily obtained. The horses suffer much from the effect of the salt on their legs and feet, and the labourers often perish miserably in the marsh when the boards break beneath their feet, since no boat can come near them. On account of these hardships and perils, the work is, of course, highly paid,—a labourer generally receiving from 50 to 60 rubles a month.

Private persons carry away at once the quantity of salt they have obtained, but the government, after filling up the vacancies made in their storehouses on the Dnieper by the consumption of the past year, builds up the remainder into great heaps on the shore.

To protect them from the injuries of rain, wind, &c., fires are kindled on their tops with straw and light combustibles, by the heat of which a certain portion of the salt is melted, and formed into a crust, so hard that it is difficult to break it even with crowbars. These stacks of salt are called *skirti*, and one of them contains generally about 400,000 pounds of salt. In 1826, an unusually productive year, it is said that upwards of six millions of poods of salt were obtained from the three Bessarabian limans.

The first liman we met with was that of Teligul—forty miles long, and about a mile-and-a-half broad. Beyond this the road runs along close to the sea-shore, which is thinly scattered with reed huts, inhabited by Cossacks, stationed here to look out for smugglers. No boat is allowed to land on this coast without a permission from the quarantine establishment of Odessa, and nothing—not even drift timber—to be taken from the sea.

We visited some of these Cossack posts, and found their pikes piled up close to the surf, their sabres hanging on the walls of their huts, and all clean and in good order.

The station lay on the steppe, close to the small liman of Buyulik, and

\* In this very year, 1842, at some of the limans, the whole harvest of the year has been destroyed by some heavy rains that set in at an unusually early period.



I walked down to the peressip, to examine once more the whole phenomenon. The sea was rushing in, in full force, through the Gheerl, two stone bridges lay in fragments near it, and a third was now building of wood. By the ford were assembled great numbers of men and vehicles, and herds of cattle, and many in their impatience to cross were driving through the sea across a sandbank. Among the voices I was surprised to hear some from countrymen of my own, and they on their parts looked no less startled to hear good German proceeding from the bearskins in which I was enveloped. In outward appearance they, as well as I, were completely Russian.

The mouth of this liman is close to Odessa, but the other end lies fifty versts off in the interior, and the concourse is consequently great at the peressip, to avoid so great a circuit.

In general this liman, which retires very little from its shores, probably on account of its great depth, produces no salt; but in the year 1824, when the summer was particularly hot and dry, and the evaporation from the water very great, the banks to the extent of several versts, were completely dried up, and the finest and richest harvest of salt was left by the retiring waters. As this had never happened before, and the liman was not considered in the light of a salt-work, no special order had ever been given concerning it, and every one thought himself entitled to whatever share of this godsend he could obtain. As the news of the phenomenon spread, the people came pouring towards the liman from Odessa, and from all the surrounding steppe, with spades, troughs, and carts, and soon set right merrily to work. The Spanish consul at Odessa especially reckoned on a glorious harvest, as he possessed an estate on the liman, that stretched upwards of a verst along the shore. He declared all the salt deposited upon this tract to be his; hired a great number of workmen, procured an immense quantity, and sold it for 300,000 rubles. Others marked out for themselves a certain portion of the liman, according to the law of first come first served. The concourse of speculators became larger and larger, and there was soon a regular and not unimportant colony established on the liman. Since no provision had been made for the victualling department, and covetousness induced many to remain beyond the time they had at first reckoned on, there soon arose a scarcity, almost amounting to famine. Bread was sold for five times its usual cost, a glass of water fetched half a ruble. The people had brought with them their wives and children and servants, that all might help in the work. The wages of labour rose immensely. A good workman earned from twelve to fifteen or twenty rubles a day, and salt was sold for half a copek, or less than a quarter of a farthing the pound. The business of collecting the salt was carried on in a hasty and disorderly manner, and many people, in consequence, lost their lives in the marshes. The greatest misfortune, however, was still to come. The officers of the crown, appointed for the protection of the salt monopoly, were at first at a loss what course to take under such unexpected circumstances. They began by declaring that a tenth belonged to the crown—and then they demanded a fifth. At length came a higher order, declaring that by virtue of the monopoly, *all* the salt belonged to the crown, and that those who had taken it must not only replace it, but must also be punished for what they had done. Many were arrested and thrown into prison, others had heavy fines imposed on their property. The consul, however, who had rejoiced

so much in his good luck, found himself in the worst case of all, and was glad enough to escape with the loss of his estate, which he sold to a Russian princess to satisfy the demands of the crown.

The morning was splendid, and the roads excellent when we left the liman, and our horses seemed to fly along towards the harbour of Odessa. Already we could distinguish the pennons of the vessels lying at anchor there, and the elegant mansions of the boulevard running along the beach. The approach to Odessa is not marked by any of those features that might be expected to announce the vicinity of from 50,000 to 60,000 inhabitants. No prosperous villages—no manufactories—no forerunners of any kind;—here is the steppe, and a yard further the city, and one might almost fancy it exercised no influence whatever on the surrounding country.

Immediately before Odessa lies the liman of the little river Kayalnik, the peressip of which is very flat and broad. The side next the sea is occupied by a suburb called after it the Peressip-suburb. It is two versts long and very lively and populous, since the two great roads leading to Odessa from the interior of Russia meet at the point of the peressip. The wheat of Podolia, the greatest article of export from the port of Odessa, and the wines, fruits, and other articles of Levantine produce sent thence to Moscow, must all pass this way, as well as most of the provisions and necessities for the town itself. The long slow processions of waggons drawn by oxen, the camels of the Tartars from the Crimea, laden with fruit, tobacco, &c., the travelling-carriages of Polish noblemen, and other passengers to and from Moscow, Petersburg, and the interior, all contribute to give life and animation to the peressip.

Odessa, as is well known, is a free port, and therefore surrounded towards the interior by a rigid custom-house line, and it has but two gates, one on the peressip, and the other on the Bessarabian road, which are usually surrounded by a throng of travellers, waggons, and cattle, which must be inspected by the custom-house officers before they are allowed to enter. Indeed the town bears some resemblance to a mouse-trap, for though it is easy enough to get in, it is very difficult to get out. No one is allowed to bring out of the town any goods which he cannot declare to be Russian, unless on entering it he has taken the precaution to obtain permission to do so.

The houses on this Peressip-suburb are built of the crumbling limestone described above, placed one on another, without cement, and they have, as might be supposed, an exceedingly ruinous and dilapidated appearance. We drove up one of the principal streets to the Hotel de Petersbourg, on the boulevard, and found there time and opportunity to refresh body and mind with the enjoyments of civilization, welcome enough after our long and wearisome wanderings across the desolate steppe.

#### ODESSA.

The situation of Odessa has been much and severely criticised—I cannot help thinking without due consideration, in spite of its many undeniable defects, such as the want of a good natural harbour and of good fresh water. The first requisite for a good commercial seaport is ease of access by land and sea; and, in a deep, navigable bay, in which light we must regard the north-western part of the Black Sea, the point which retires furthest into the land is the most desirable. The roadstead of Odessa

offers at least some protection to vessels, an advantage which practical men, acquainted with this coast, are well able to appreciate, however it may be overlooked by the learned men who have never visited it, and since many objections existed to the mouths of the Dnieper and the Dniester, perhaps, on the whole, no spot could have been better chosen.

The great merchants of Odessa are mostly Greeks, Italians, and Germans. English houses, such as are found in Riga and St. Petersburg, strange to say, do not exist here; but there are a few French, trading chiefly in wine. Of Russian merchants, carrying on business with foreign countries, there are just as few as at other Russian seaports. In the whole there are in Odessa from forty to fifty great commercial houses, of which the principal are Greeks.\*

The principal article of export from Odessa is the wheat of Podolia, Bessarabia and New Russia, and the only others of any consequence are tallow and wool. The imports are of course mostly manufactured goods, of which a large quantity, officially stated to be for the use of Odessa, find their way, by means of the smugglers, into the interior. Wines, dyestuffs, raisins, fruits, and cotton go from Odessa as far as Moscow, but the advantages of the great market of St. Petersburg are such that great quantities even of goods from the Mediterranean reach the interior of Russia by the way of that city instead of by Odessa. The latter is, indeed, too new to have yet taken possession of the entire trading territory that naturally belongs to it, and it is not at present able to contend on equal terms with two such powerful rivals as Riga and St. Petersburg.

In what a simple and rude state the trade of Odessa still is may be imagined from the fact of the owners of estates occupying themselves with exporting their own corn. Many of the Polish nobility have counting-

\* According to the *Journal d'Odessa*, the coasting trade occasions the arrival there, on an average, of 500 small vessels yearly; and of these, 350 to 400 are from the mouth of the Dnieper, from ten to fifteen from the Dniester, and from eight to twelve from the Danube. In 1836 the coasting vessels that arrived at Odessa were as follow :—From the Dnieper, 382; from the Dniester, 6; from the Danube, 6; from the Crimea, 66; from the Don and the Sea of Azoff, 23; from the Caucasus, 4;—total, 487. The great bulk, however, of the goods sent from the interior to Odessa, for export, arrive not by sea, but by land carriage. In the same year (1837), 797 vessels cleared out from Odessa for foreign ports; and as these vessels were, on an average, eight or ten times as large as the coasters, that circumstance alone is sufficient to show how much more merchandise must have arrived by land-carriage. In point of foreign trade Odessa ranks now as the third port in Russia. The five principal Russian maritime cities are—St. Petersburg, at the mouth of the Neva; Riga, at the mouth of the Dwina (more properly Düna); Odessa, near the mouth of the Dnieper; Taganrog, at the mouth of the Don; and Arkhangel, at the mouth of the Dwina. The exports and imports of St. Petersburg double in amount those of the other four ports put together. Odessa and Riga are nearly equal in this respect. The following table will show this more clearly:

	St. Petersburg.	Riga.	Odessa.	Taganrog.	Arkhangel.
Vessels arriving from, and departing for foreign ports.....	1500—2000	1000—1500	600—800	300—400	350—500
	Millions.	Millions.	Millions.	Millions.	Millions.
Exports.....	100—120	35—50	25—30	10	10
Imports.....	140—160	15—20	20—25	5	1
Relative commercial im- portance of each port expressed in numbers	25	6	5	1½	1



houses and warehouses in Odessa, and the produce of their lands passes immediately out of their hands into those of the captains of vessels, without any intervention of the merchant.

In any city where there existed a skilful, experienced, and cultivated body of merchants, who must necessarily stand in much closer connexion with the mercantile world in general, and to whom it would be, consequently, much easier judiciously to combine their speculations, than to the mere agriculturist, this could hardly be the case.

The rapidity of correspondence from Odessa was estimated for me by a great merchant thus:—A letter takes from two to three days to go to Constantinople, eight to nine to St. Petersburg, ten to Vienna, eleven or twelve to Hamburg, and from London an answer may be received over Warsaw or St. Petersburg in from twenty-five to twenty-seven days.

The ground on which Odessa stands is of considerable extent, and perfectly flat. The streets are, like all new Russian streets, immensely broad, and so completely open that one can often see the sea at one end and the steppe at the other, and look from the middle of the city at once into the waste of waters and the waste of grass. This great breadth of the streets, which is sometimes considered as an advantage, is very far from being such at Odessa, for it only leaves the passenger more pitilessly exposed to sun, wind, and dust,\* and increases the difficulty of paving. There is probably no city in the world where the expense of paving is greater than in Odessa, the stones for this purpose having to be brought from Italy and Malta; of course the principal streets only are paved. The state of the rest serves to explain many current stories of the good old times when the whole city was in the same condition. A caricature I saw, under which was written, "How to establish oneself in Odessa," represented a Frenchman, just arrived from Marseilles, sticking up to his knees in the mud, and exclaiming, "*Je me fixe ici!*" Another, called "The use of the Odessa street-police," showed a woman sinking deeper and deeper into the mire, till at length she puts her foot on something hard, and thanks Heaven that she is saved. The hard thing proves to be the head of a mounted policeman, who has sunk in along with his horse.

The names of the streets of Odessa are written up at the corners, both in the Russian and Italian languages, as "*Piazza Alessandra*," and immediately over it, "*Alexandrinoffskaya Ploshtshad*," these two languages being the most generally understood.

Russian is the language of the common people, of servants and coachmen, of the market and the harbour, as well as the official language of the authorities. Italian is spoken by the numerous Italian residents, and by the Greeks, who are the principal merchants in the city; it is, therefore, the language of the Exchange and of commerce, and the daily Price Current is printed in it. French is, of course, the language of conversation in the elegant circles, and the *Journal d'Odessa* appears in the French language.

The Jews all speak bad German, and how great is the confusion of

\* The dust in summer, in Odessa, is a greater nuisance than in any city in the world that ever I visited. This dust is extremely light and fine; is raised by the slightest breath of wind in immense clouds; hangs suspended in the air like smoke; and is so excessively penetrating, that it will make its way into the interior of a house, however carefully doors and windows may be kept closed.

tongues may be imagined from the circumstance of amateur performances being given in the same theatre in five different languages. In the streets one hears Russian, English, Italian, German, Tartar, Polish, Turkish, Greek, Armenian, Moldavian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Dalmatian, French, Swedish, and Spanish, and these are not spoken merely by passing strangers, but by the regular inhabitants; in short, the confusion of tongues which prevails, more or less, all over Russia, reaches in Odessa the true Babylonish extreme.

The buildings of Odessa are all, more or less, in the Italian style, with only two stories, flat roofs, and an abundance of columns and balconies; and as they have always plenty of room to show themselves, they produce a very good effect. One sees nowhere the deformed misshapen houses so frequent in narrow German towns; but what struck me as especially pleasing were the corn-magazines, through whose handsome airy windows the golden blessings of the fields might be seen heaped up in rich masses. These magazines are built with the same elegance as the dwelling-houses, and indeed are frequently metamorphosed into them. Some are really magnificent; in particular, those of Count Potocki, and those which, before the Polish insurrection, belonged to the Count Sabanski. The latter have since become the property of the crown, and Sabanski, who took a leading part in that unfortunate struggle, has fled his country. Many of the Poles have also disappeared from Odessa, and its trade has suffered in consequence.

Immediately on our arrival at Odessa, we found ourselves in the hands of a Jew, who announced himself as the "*Factor*" of the hotel,—a dignity with which I had not previously been acquainted. The "*Factor*," it seems, is the representative of the landlord; he points out lodgings to strangers, makes agreements with them, procures servants for them, and generally attends to their wishes. The landlord himself, or, as he calls himself, the *proprietor* of the hotel, never shows himself at all, but lives in dignified retirement without troubling himself about his guests, and merely verifies every evening the accounts of his Factor. He is never, as with us, a cook or waiter, who has worked himself up through the various grades, and who knows how to animate the whole establishment with his active spirit, but is usually a retired merchant or a *ci-devant* officer in the army. In the kitchen, of course he takes no concern, but farms it out to a *Traiteur*, who has his own servants in the house, and supplies what is wanted.

It may easily be supposed that upon this plan, though the hotels of Odessa are very large, they are extremely uncomfortable. Every guest is expected to bring with him his own servant and his own bedding, as he will find nothing but the bare bedstead, or at most some mattresses; and if he has them not he must make a separate agreement concerning them with the Factor. This exceedingly inconvenient arrangement prevails also in the Crimea, Bessarabia, and Galicia. It is probably a custom derived from Poland, whose manners have exercised generally a very important influence in Odessa.

The second individual to whom we were introduced was a Grusinian, a professor of the tonsorial art. During the time we had spent on the steppe, our beards had grown like the grass, and to relieve ourselves from this incumbrance, in the manner in which the operation is managed here, was a real enjoyment. A young, handsome, elegant-looking fellow, dressed

in a rich half-European, half-Asiatic costume, presented himself as barber, and his agreeable manners, no less than his skill in his occupation, convinced us at once that the barber's is a genuine oriental art. He informed me that his country-people are almost exclusively in possession of this trade in Odessa. They have upwards of a hundred shops, which are spacious pleasant apartments, handsomely carpeted, and adorned with pictures and flowers, with a long divan running all round them. In Germany one cannot visit such places without disgust, but here they are really an agreeable lounge, and make one understand at once the part they play in Eastern life.

There are two harbours in Odessa; one for the Russian ships of war and coasters; the other, called the Quarantine harbour, for all vessels coming from plague countries; and as no foreign ships can reach Odessa without passing the Bosphorus, which is considered unclean as belonging to Turkey, the quarantine-harbour necessarily receives all foreign vessels.

To each of these two harbours, a deep valley or ravine leads down from the high terrace of the steppe. These ravines, probably, were at one time water-courses, but now the stream of human life is the only stream that flows through them; for they are the only roads to the sea-shore, with the exception of some little inconvenient footpaths. Waggon with goods are, consequently, always moving up and down, and droshkies are incessantly flying through them with merchants and their clerks, who are obliged to adopt this mode of communicating with the captains in quarantine.

The quarantine harbour encloses a large space of ground, reaching back to the steppe, surrounded with walls and fortifications, and by a line of soldiers with loaded fire-arms, who will allow no living soul to enter—or more properly, none to go out. The walls contain a citadel, an hospital for the sick, warehouses for suspected goods, dwelling-houses for the physicians and other officials, as well as for persons subjected to quarantine, and coffee-houses, besides spacious grounds for walking about and for the unloading of goods. Towards the sea the quarantine harbour is watched by a cordon of armed vessels.

As soon as a ship makes its appearance, it is compelled to go to anchor outside this cordon, until an officer of the quarantine establishment can go on board to examine it. Should it come direct from an unsuspected Russian port, it is allowed to proceed immediately into the inner harbour. Should it, however, have passed the Bosphorus, it must first remain fourteen days at anchor in the roadstead without daring to enter even the quarantine harbour. A guard is then put on board the ship, and it is left what is called in observance for the stated period. If after the lapse of this time no sickness appears, the ship is allowed to run into the quarantine harbour, and can now receive or unload goods, and, under certain restrictions, hold communication with the shore. The passengers can also procure lodgings in the buildings set apart for the purpose, and pass the rest of their forty days in rather a more convenient manner than on board ship.

The goods imported by sea are divided into two classes—namely, suspected and unsuspected. To the latter belong sugar, coffee, corn, fruit, wood, &c. (that is, unless the coverings in which they are wrapped may render them suspected); and these are conveyed into a particular warehouse, with one gate towards the sea and another towards the land. As



soon as the ship's people have retired, and the smallest morsel of any thing belonging to them left behind has been carefully burnt, the gates towards the sea are closed, the opposite ones opened, and the merchants are permitted to send for the goods.

For the goods regarded as suspected, especially cotton, there are many and tedious modes of purification. The thick bales of cotton must be entirely unpacked, picked to pieces, and spread in thin layers over horizontal gratings. They are then fumigated for twelve hours with chlorine, and exposed for the same time to the fresh air.

As this business of unpacking and purifying the cotton is considered excessively dangerous, it is only performed by those who are considered as already lost to society—namely, those sentenced to transportation to Siberia. They are called in Odessa *mortus*, or in the plural *mortusse*, from the Latin *mortuus*, because they are regarded as destined to fall a prey to the plague (though the truth is, they are seldom attacked by it); and it is a melancholy spectacle to watch them through the gratings, clothed from head to foot in black leather, heavily ironed, and pursuing their dangerous and sometimes fatal occupation.

The shipment of goods from the land is accompanied by just as many formalities. The goods are brought out in boats kept for the purpose to about halfway towards the ship. The people from the shore then retire, and the plague soldiers come on board the boat, and hoist the yellow plague-flag as a signal to those on board the ship. After they have retired, the boat must be swept out and exposed to the fumes of burning sulphur, before it can be again used. It is wonderful that all this should not have been fatal to the trade of Odessa. What a benefit would the English confer on mankind if they could prove that the plague is not really infectious!

Communication with persons in quarantine is carried on in a pleasant little garden, planted with acacia-trees, through which runs a long arcade, with a threefold separation; on each side a trellis of wood, and in the middle a grating of iron wire, which not even a letter could be passed through. Many little divisions or boxes are formed in these arcades, in which matters requiring privacy may be discussed. The garden, like the streets, rejoices in a twofold appellation, and is called indifferently "*il Parlatorio*," or "*Rasgovorui*," the latter word signifying a dialogue.

It is amusing enough to ramble about this garden, and see on one side the pure, rejoicing in their innocence, strolling up and down, waiting for their friends the unhappy suspected, who, on the other side of the grating, are whiling away their tedious imprisonment as well as they can. Every little grated chamber is occupied by persons, with their faces pressed against the wooden trellis, conversing confidentially, and pouring out their hearts to each other at four yards' distance. Some are talking loud, and scolding at a real or imagined injury, while the object of their reproaches sits tranquilly, at a safe distance, behind the railing; sometimes a lover is watching his mistress, imprisoned for four weeks behind the grating; or a mother may be seen holding up her children, who vainly stretch their little arms towards the plague side, which contains their father.

The road from the city to the quarantine harbour runs along the sea-shore, which is occupied by a row of warehouses. These serve for the immediate reception of goods brought from quarantine, such as English

coals, Levant fruits, Greek wines, Italian stores, Egyptian cotton, which are here laid up in immense quantities, as well as vast heaps of Greek and Turkish sweetmeats, which the Russians have everlastingly in their mouths. These magazines are also cut off from the town by gates and barriers, not however, on account of the plague, but of the custom-house.\*

The other harbour contains little that is interesting. A few ships of war, a few wretched steamboats, which run between this place and the Crimea, and some Russian coasters whose crews are said to be among the worst sailors in the world. In illustration of the lubberly character of these Russian coasting sailors, various odd stories are told at Odessa. It was related to me, though perhaps with some exaggeration, that an English captain entering the Dardanelles in bad weather, once met one of these Khersonese vessels off the coast of Troy, and was asked what shore they were off? It then appeared that the poor devils had been caught in a storm, had lost not only mast and sails, but their wits into the bargain, and had been fairly driven by the wind through the Black Sea, the Bosphorus, the Propontis, and the Dardanelles, into the Egean Sea, without being able to make out where they were. The Englishman took them in tow, and brought them into Odessa.—“The first thing these Khersonese do when the weather gets rough,” said a merchant to me, “is to throw overboard whatever they can, and if that does not set all right, they throw themselves on their knees before the images of their saints, and abandon their ship to the mercy of Providence.

The Greeks, on the contrary, are as bold sailors as are to be found anywhere, and scarcely ever lose their ships unless they choose to do so; but as they are known to be the greatest rogues in the world, no one will insure them willingly, at least not without a very high premium. The Greek captain, when he gets a good way off Odessa into the sea of Marmora, or the Archipelago, suddenly bethinks himself that his ship is old and good-for-nothing, and insured in Odessa for a handsome sum; and he soon manages to run his ship on some island, or on the coast of Anatolia, saves himself and his crew, bribes the Turkish authorities to confirm his account of the wreck, proves and swears all that is required, and pockets a handsome sum from the insurers in Odessa.

The Turkish sailor again is different from both. In ignorance he equals the Khersonese, but his good faith may be relied on; and whilst with the Greek the insurers calculate the chances of his turning out a rogue, with the Turks they merely consider the hazard to be feared from his awkwardness. The Turkish sailors are the honestest fellows in the world, and always mean to take as good care of their ships as they can, with the help of the Prophet; but without caring much for chart or compass.

The premium for insurances on the Black Sea is always very high, and higher from Odessa to the Caucasus, than for a voyage to England, for, although the Black Sea is entirely free from shoals or islands, it is still now, as in ancient times, one of the most dangerous inland seas in the world. The inaccuracy of the charts, the scarcity even of such as they have, and the want of good harbours, contributes much to this insecurity.

\* Although Odessa is called a free port, merchandise there is still liable to duty; but the duty is only one-fifth of what it would be in any other Russian port, and this fifth has been given to the city, which derives from this concession a revenue of three or four millions of rubles yearly.

Of the two nations which have been hitherto in possession of the coasts of this sea, the Turks have never done any thing for navigation, and the Russians nothing important till lately; so little, indeed, that on an irregular line of coast extending upwards of 2000 miles, there are not more than eighteen lighthouses. On some points the perils are increased by the barbarous character of the inhabitants, and besides all this, there is much that is still unexplained in the nature of the sea itself, and in the sudden changes of winds and currents, that render it disagreeable and perilous to navigators.

In winter the navigation of the Black Sea is usually interrupted for several months, as the storms rage there as violently as in the neighbouring northern steppe. The northern ports are mostly frozen, too, during the whole winter, and the sea is covered with ice, sometimes for a distance of eight miles from the land.

Instances have frequently been known, of the ice from the Crimea to Odessa being solid enough to travel over. The same thing has, indeed, sometimes happened at the northern part of the Adriatic, but there it is an uncommon occurrence; whereas it has been observed that the navigation of Odessa has been interrupted oftener, and for a longer time than that of Copenhagen.

There is no doubt that the immense extent of the flat steppes exercises an evil influence on the Euxine. From its shores to Arkhangel and Kamtshatka no mountain wall is interposed, to shelter the Black Sea from the severity of the north and east winds; nay, not even hills or forests occur capable of tempering them; and to this it is probably owing that the roughness of the climate about Odessa greatly exceeds what might be expected from its southerly position.

The most dreaded part of the Black Sea is still, as in the time of the Argonauts, the entrance to the Thracian Bosphorus. Many vessels perish there every year, and much depends on having a well-built argo.

The trade of Odessa is, of course, powerfully influential on the welfare of the surrounding countries, and in proportion as it has grown rich and populous the provinces of Bessarabia, New Russia, Podolia, the Ukraine, and the Crimea, have become peopled and cultivated. The town pays to the country-people, merely for the carriage of goods, yearly, from three to four millions of rubles; many lands are cultivated solely on account of Odessa capitalists, and they are always willing to make advances, and receive corn in payment of the debt. They often afford the same assistance to the breeders of cattle, and take tallow and leather in return.

Many Odessa merchants have invested their capital in great estates, and, like the Polish landowners, produce for themselves the articles, which, as merchants, they afterwards export.

The years in which the trade of Odessa developed itself in the most rapid and brilliant manner, and on which the province as well as the inhabitants of the city look back as on a golden age, were, from causes to be sought in the position of Europe at the period, those from 1815 to 1820. The merchants tell with glee of the enormous prices the wheat rose to; the waggoners how they earned five or six rubles for going merely from the warehouse to the harbour; and the Ukraine nobles still glory in the magnificent balls they were able to give, at a time when they found their corn transformed so easily and rapidly into silver.



The great revenues of the city of Odessa, and the simple and easy manner in which they are collected, might lead one to expect more important undertakings for the public good than those of mere external decoration, but the heterogeneous character of the population may perhaps account for its more than common deficiency in public spirit. Good pavements, a few public gardens, a splendid staircase for foot-passengers from the sea-shore to the Boulevards, a handsome custom house, a botanical garden, and a city library which no one goes near,—these are the only public works that have as yet been thought of.—No hospital, poorhouses, or asylums for orphans are anywhere to be seen, and it must be confessed that the selfishness of our age is nowhere more coarsely manifested than in the streets of Odessa, where, among so many magnificent private dwellings, not one is to be found devoted to the public good.

The most interesting of the institutions I have mentioned is the Botanical Garden, at present under the direction of the celebrated Professor Norman. This garden is in fact a nursery in which all possible kinds of trees are planted, partly to supply the demands of the inhabitants of the steppe and partly to discover what kind of trees are suitable to the climate and soil. This garden does not contain less than four millions of trees, old and young, although half a million were killed by the frost of the past winter. The lovers of trees and gardens have indeed to struggle here with great and almost insurmountable difficulties. First, with the droughts of summer, not even relieved by any dew; then, with the want of river and spring water; thirdly, with the severity of the winter, and the violence of the storms; and lastly, what is worst of all, with the substratum of chalk, which is fatal and murderous to the roots of all trees. As long as the trees are young and the roots continue in the upper soil, if the seasons are not too unfavourable, they usually flourish, but as soon as their roots reach the bed of chalk, they begin to grow sickly, their growth ceases, and most of them soon die. No tree in or near Odessa is more than twenty-eight years old, and though there has not yet been sufficient time to form a decisive judgment, not more than forty years having elapsed since plantations were first attempted in Odessa, yet the best gardeners and foresters are in despair about it, and the attempts which here and there nature seems to have made to plant trees in the steppe have succeeded just as ill as those of art. Their crippled and miserable state plainly indicates the unsuitableness of the soil, and the great forests which occupy the valleys of the Dnieper the Dniester, &c. have never been able to gain a foot of land on the high steppe. The only method that has been found to ensure tolerable health for a tree in Odessa, is that of digging out the injurious stratum of chalk, and filling up the vacancy with good soil, and in some gardens regular canals have been dug, and avenues planted with some success, but such a plan could never be carried out on a very large scale.

The trouble that is taken with a tree in the Botanical Garden of Odessa may be understood, if we take as an example the treatment of the young pines. The seeds are sown in a box filled with earth, and placed in a greenhouse; there they are left for two years, and they are then planted

out in pots, and in summer allowed to stand out in the open air, but kept in the shade, and in the winter put back into the greenhouse. When the young tree is four or five years old, it is planted out in the garden, but still surrounded with a roof or covering of reeds, directed towards the north in the winter to keep off the cold wind, and towards the south in summer to protect it from the rays of the sun. From this it may be judged what foundation there is for the hopes expressed by some travellers "that the steppe will one day be covered with luxuriant forests."

The library of Odessa is exceedingly small and insignificant; but as it contains a tolerable number of antiquities from Olbia and from the Chersonesus Trachea, and is besides most pleasantly situated, I often spent a few hours there and always found myself *tête-à-tête* with the librarian, an old Italian, who was busily engaged on an antiquarian work. In the book-sellers' shops in Odessa, nothing is to be had but the new French books; here and there you may meet with a little German circulating library, where Savon parfumé, Eau de Cologne, and Sacs de Nuit, are also to be procured. These suffice for the literary wants of Odessa.

The other public buildings are the Imperial Lyceum, where there are as many professors as pupils; the Exchange; and the Theatre, said to be principally supported by Count Woronzoff, and where Italian operas are usually given, varied by amateur performances in various languages.

#### SHOPS AND MARKETS.

After observing the great movements of commerce in the external trade of Odessa, the traveller naturally feels some curiosity to see a few of its internal operations.

Through the whole city up to its remotest extremities there runs a garland of shops, booths, &c. which present a curious assemblage of all or much that is to be found in the many lands whose fragments are here reflected as in a broken mirror. There are the "Magasins de Nouveautés," in the Rue de Richelieu; the Greek bazaar for fruits, spices, tobacco, and vegetables, from Constantinople; the booths for Russian, Tartar and Oriental goods; the old and new bazaars for fish and flesh; and the bazaar outside the town, for cattle, hay, wood, horses, &c.

The foreign shops lie in the handsomest part of the town, near the boulevard and the palaces, for whose especial service they are destined. They contain little that is peculiar and characteristic. French millinery, Swiss watches, English cloths, and French wines, as at St. Petersburg. Their elegance leaves nothing to be wished for. In the Marseilles wine-shops, the corks of the bottles are gilt or silvered, the champagne tastefully wrapped up in gold or silver paper, and every article is neatly arranged, as it might be in a chemist's shop. The French and English tailors exhibit their goods in saloons with looking-glasses and chandeliers, and Paris itself could hardly offer a more tempting selection of laces, caps, and ribbons, than the apartments of Mademoiselle S., who was formerly a governess, but afterwards went to Paris, and laid in a stock of millinery for the wealthy dames of Odessa, with whose tastes she was well acquainted. She made her fortune, and is about to retire, and will carry with her the "regrets" of all the ladies of the place. One must remember what an enchanter trade is, to understand how all these fine things could find their way

through such crooked passages, round so many capes and peninsulas, these barbarous shores of the steppes.

The Greek bazaar contains early fruit, delicate vegetables, and spices, mostly from Constantinople, which are brought here by the steamboat; but the shops most peculiar to Odessa are the tobacco-vaults, the arrangement of which is altogether Turkish, except that the spaciousness of every place in Odessa has enabled them to assume an air of elegance and convenience, not easily obtained in the narrow intricate lanes of the capital of the Padishah.

The Turkish pipe heads are gilt and decorated with a tasteful variety of brilliant colours, and ornamentally-disposed glass and crystal vases; and there are also all manner of elegant ornaments for pipes, very pretty to look at, but very difficult to describe in words. In every shop is also sold a machine for cutting the tobacco excessively fine, for the Greeks say the Russians cut it like cabbage. Every shop is provided with looking-glasses and divans, for the orientals when they buy tobacco like to be able to smoke a part of it on the spot. There are never wanting some smoking and chattering Greeks, Turks, or Armenians, who consider these tobacco-shops as regular lounging-places, like the coffee-houses, the bath, or the shaving-rooms.

There exists no Gostinnoi Dvor at Odessa, where, as in other Russian cities, all descriptions of merchandise may be united under one roof. The Privosdni Bazaar, however, is an excellent theatre for the exhibition of local and national peculiarities—especially of the Moldavians and Gipsies. The principal wares sold here are different kinds of fuel for the use of the city, which are brought in enormous quantities. Perhaps there is not a city in the world that employs such various articles for this purpose as Odessa. Wood from Poland and Bessarabia, coals from England, charcoal from the country about Kisheneff, reeds from the Dnieper and Dniester, straw from the villages on the steppe, and dried dung and withered vine-branches from the German colonies.

Each of these materials has its particular use—straw for baking-ovens, coals and wood for the kitchens of the rich, reeds and dung for those of the poor. The people have also learned to distinguish with great accuracy the duration of heat to be looked for from each of them. They know that straw keeps the heat much longer than reeds, milfoil much longer than the stalks of the wild clover, &c.

Wood is exceedingly dear, and one can often buy a waggon-load of good crayfish for a smaller price than the same quantity of wood. The charcoal comes exclusively from the forests in the neighbourhood of Kisheneff, and the waggons in which it is brought have a very curious appearance, as in order to contain a greater quantity of this light article, they are surrounded with wicker-work as high as a tower, and when a great number of them come together, they have the appearance of a moving town. This wicker-work, as well as the charcoal, is usually sold at Odessa, where every splinter of wood is sure to find a purchaser. The waggons of hay, straw, and reeds, are still more numerous; and, indeed, on the market-days, come in such throngs, that in the lanes and streets which they form, one may easily lose oneself. This is natural enough, for straw and reeds make of course a very bulky kind of fuel, and a few hundred loads of them flare away in a day merely to boil the kettles for coffee. Immense quantities of hay are also sold at a very low price, as food for cattle, of which the Russian cities always contain greater numbers than any others, and Odessa almost more than any



other Russian city. Almost every one can afford to keep horses, oxen, and cows, and the nature of the trade, and the distance of the quarantine harbour, necessarily occasions a great demand for draught animals.

Hay, therefore, is consumed in immense quantities, and the whole town may be said to be surrounded by a wall of hay. Many of the dealers arrange their merchandise into a high hollow square, which serves them as a regular dwelling. They place a door for an entrance, and before it hang up a pair of scales for the purpose of weighing their hay. These hay magazines encircle the whole town.

The great scarcity of wood has naturally led to the employment of dung as a substitute of fuel. In all the villages in this country, it is seen laid along the hedges and walls to dry during the whole summer; and the due preparation of it is one of the regular employments of the country. Even in the steppe, one sees the shepherds carefully collecting it into heaps, and when a sufficient quantity is obtained, it is carted home. After lying the whole winter, and being either trodden by horses, or kneaded by the hand, it is made up in spring into various fanciful forms. The latter method of working is considered by far the best.

The Privosdni Bazaar is also much frequented by gipsies; for as they are all, without exception, able to work as smiths, they set up their tents where there is the greatest concourse of horses and waggons. The language of these gipsies is that of the Tartars, and their religion, if one can apply the word at all to them, is Mahomedan. The women and girls wear on their heads a red fez, ornamented with gold coins, and plait their hair into twenty tails, like the Tartar women. They smoke all day long as well as the men, and will not even lay aside their pipes while they fetch water. Their tents are the most miserable habitations in the world—a Lapland hut is a palace compared to them; and certainly a more striking picture of laziness could not well be found than that of three or four stout fellows, who could build a house in a few days, creeping under a covering of reeds and grass laid over a few crossed sticks, and covered with a bit of torn sail-cloth probably stolen from a wreck. The father of a gipsy family is, as I have said, a smith, and the mother assists his work by blowing the fire, while she smokes her pipe,—the children being despatched into the neighbouring towns to beg. They have the reputation of being clever at sharpening instruments, and they have generally a number of scythes, hatchets, &c., sent for repair, lying by them whilst they sit with their feet in a hole to supply the want of a high anvil. Indifferent as these people are to the severities of the weather, they are by no means so to the enjoyments of the palate, though their taste in these matters is somewhat peculiar. They prize amazingly the entrails of some animals, and one of their greatest delicacies is a hedgehog; so much so, that they will spend on the purchase of one of them the produce of a whole day's toil. I once was suddenly surrounded by a whole troop of gipsy boys and girls crying out "*Dai pan! Dai pan!*" (Give, master, give!) and on receiving a small piece of money, though they were most of them all but naked, they all rushed to buy plums and sweetmeats, and then ran screaming and fighting up the street. It happened that a waggon was going down, and the driver applied his whip to rid himself of the troublesome throng, when they all uttered a screech, spit at him, and then darted away, their black hair streaming in the wind. One of the eldest of the girls had a very young baby on her arm, which she put down in the dust without ceremony whenever she wished to quarrel or fight. Notwith-

standing their wild and savage appearance, they are not destitute of beauty; they have fine black eyes, and well-proportioned figures.

The only manufactories which I was able to discover in Odessa, were a few rope walks and some places where macaroni was made. In the former, many ropes are made for the Turkish fleet, and I knew one ropemaker who sent every year 20,000 poods of ropes to Constantinople. These ropes are sometimes made of the enormous thickness of a Berlin ell in diameter. The macaroni factories send their goods all over the Black Sea and the grassy sea of the steppes, where dried bread and ships' biscuits are often as necessary as on the wide ocean.

The schools of Odessa are not in a more flourishing state than the manufactures of the town, but to my surprise I found there were schools of some sort or other for almost every nation. Italian, German, Armenian, and Greek for children of the lower classes; those of the higher classes nearly all visit the Imperial Lyceum.

The few ships which belong to Odessa are exclusively the property of Greek houses. They are usually built in Greece, but sail under the Russian flag. The vessels built at Kherson are said to be excessively slight, and the inhabitants of the coast are competent judges on this point, for they are frequently employed in breaking up the wrecks cast away by the continual storms. The hull of an English ship throws them quite into despair; for they say that, notwithstanding the quantity of wood and iron contained in it, it gives them more trouble to break up than it is worth.

The rapidity of voyages from this port to England, as compared with those to other countries, would also seem to imply a superiority in English shipping. To Constantinople, a voyage is calculated to average 5 or 6 days; to Smyrna, 15; to Messina, 20 to 25; to Algiers, 25 to 30; to Egypt, 30 to 35; to Naples, 25 to 30; to Trieste, 35 to 40; to Marseilles, 45 to 50; and to England, 60 to 70.

According to statistical returns there are 563 springs and wells in and about Odessa. Where they hide themselves, I know not. In the suburbs and on the peressip there are certainly wells, but the water is quite brackish, and the *Malaya Fontan* is the only one from which water fit for drinking can be had. It is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  versts from the city, and nearly every house in the city is supplied from it. The oft-projected aqueduct not having yet been realised, the carrying of water affords occupation to no less than 2000 labourers, who are all day long conveying their indispensable merchandise in large casks fixed on wheels from the steppe to the city. Water, under these circumstances, is naturally rather an expensive article. People pay from twenty to forty rubles a month, according to the number of a family. One merchant, whose establishment was by no means large, told me he paid 450 rubles a year for water. There is a second spring, the *Bolshaya Fontan*, of which the water is excellent; but, unfortunately, it lies ten versts away from the town. The water of some of the other fountains is said to be drinkable in autumn, but is seldom used except for watering cattle.

However scarce water may be, and however difficult it may at times be to a temperate man to find the means of slaking his thirst, he need never be at a loss for matter wherewith to appease his hunger. Large cabbages for winter store I saw selling at  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ruble the hundred; peas and beans cost two rubles a pood, when they first came into season, but soon fell to sixty and even to forty copeks, and at last the price was too low to pay the

country-people for bringing them into town. In the summer of 1838, I saw the German colonists throw away whole mountains of potatoes of the preceding year, merely that they might make room in their cellars for those of the fresh crop. Odessa may be said, with respect to food, to be in a constant state, of repletion. Nowhere do I remember ever to have seen such quantities of eatables. Even the golden wheat may be seen spread out on cloths in the streets that it may dry in the sun.

#### EXCURSIONS IN THE STEPPES—ENVIRONS OF ODESSA.

In cities, the great assemblages of men, the traveller has so many new things to see at every turn, a single glance often showing him so much that is interesting, that he scarcely knows where to begin or where to end. Some time and some reflection are necessary to arrange the abundant materials which almost overwhelm him at first; to find a clue to the labyrinth, and to make out from what point to view the heterogeneous masses of things presented to his notice. This was my case in Odessa, but I never ceased to wander through and examine the town till I had attained, at all events, a clear and perfect idea of the plan of the whole.

My travelling companion had now left me to go to the Sea of Asoph, in order to take possession of a little island left to him as a legacy, but as I had made many agreeable and useful acquaintances among the professors at the Lyceum and among the German merchants, I passed my time very pleasantly. After I had made myself well acquainted with the city, I thought I might venture to extend my inquiries and make some excursions: first to the environs of Odessa, and afterwards to the German colonies and the Dniester.

Like all inhabitants of great cities, the people of Odessa seek to escape from it to the country in the blooming season of the year, and enjoy, as well as they can, the pleasures of a rural life, even on their inhospitable steppes, where nature seems continually to oppose their plans. I visited several of these country seats, or "*khutors*," as they are called, (why I could never make out, for the word is neither Russian or Italian), on which their owners had expended hundreds and thousands, though there was scarcely a tree or a shrub to be seen; and it is no easy matter to lay out even a small garden on this flat, arid soil, destitute of springs, exposed in summer to a scorching heat, and in winter to a rough hyperborean north wind. When these difficulties have been in some measure overcome, however, it must be owned, these little flowery oases are very delightful after the immeasurable waste of the steppe, or the dusty streets of Odessa, and the busy merchant does well to spend what he can afford in providing such an agreeable retreat for his summer evenings. The pleasure of these things can never be measured by their absolute value, and there is no doubt the simple little khutor affords as much satisfaction to its possessor as the most magnificent Roman villa. I recollect an Odessa merchant who exhibited to me, with the greatest pride and delight, a birch-tree in his garden, which he assured me was the largest in all Odessa, and consequently for a hundred and sixty miles round. It was fifteen feet high, and so thick that at the bottom one could scarcely span it with four fingers. His joy in this rare specimen of arboriculture, was already checked, however, by anxiety lest it should soon begin to languish and die. The tree which



prosper most, and is, therefore, most frequently seen, is the acacia; among flowers it is the dahlia that thrives with the greatest luxuriance.

A few of these khutors have what might almost be called a romantic situation, where the high precipitous bank looking over the Black Seas has, in some measure fallen in, forming, what the Russians call the *obruivi*. The abrupt fall of the edge of the steppe which has formed these *obruivi*, occurs all along the coast from the mouth of the Dnieper to that of the Danube. This is sometimes occasioned by the waves dashing against and wearing away the lower part of the bank, but more frequently by the action of springs beneath the upper strata of the steppe, and even below the level of the sea. Hollow places are thus formed, into which large portions of the ground sink down, occasionally as much as from ten to twelve fathoms of perpendicular depth.

I visited a piece of land which had sunk in this way a few months before, and where all the consequences were still distinctly visible. The terrace of the steppe at this place was about twenty-five or thirty fathoms high, and the piece of land had fallen about ten, but continued in a perfectly horizontal position. The sinking mass had raised the sea-shore as much as fifteen or twenty feet, so that the little shells and pebbles that before had been rolled backwards and forwards by the waves, now lay high and dry on an eminence, at whose foot the surf was breaking. Trees which had grown on this piece of land, in the gardens, were overthrown or buried, parts of the gardens entirely destroyed and covered with masses of earth and chalk, and the foundations of two houses had suffered so much that the houses themselves had fallen in. The people in the neighbourhood related, that in the night, when the fall took place, they had been terrified by the perpetual thundering and cracking of the ground, and that the floors of their houses had rocked as during an earthquake.

I have seen some other spots where the sinking mass had raised little islands from the bottom of the sea, and as these falls have happened at various times one behind another on the coast, there have been formed between the steppe and the sea a series of terraces that have been gradually rounded off and covered with grass, so as to form a little miniature imitation of mountain scenery between the two monotonous surfaces of water and grass. Here a little elegant colony of khutors has been planted; and as the trees and flowers have much more protection than on the high steppe, they flourish much better. These khutors, of which, however, there are only six, are far superior to any of the other villas around Odessa, and accordingly it was in one of these that the empress resided while the emperor was besieging Varna.

On my return I visited the hut of a Cossack, which lay by the roadside. He and his comrades were from beyond the Danube, and formed part of the coast-guard. Some were below on the water fishing for the benefit of the little *ménage*. Their hut, which lay half concealed under some bushes, on the point of a little cape, was extremely neat, and contained their beds, their household utensils, their arms, and a looking-glass. Whether this neatness was to be attributed to their own love of order, or to the vigilant superintendence of their officers, I know not.

During the last Turkish war these Cossacks came over to the Russians, but they were previously in the service of the Turks. They said they had a far pleasanter life with the Padishah, or Pasha, as they called him. They had had fifty rubles' pay every four months, and now they had so

little that their fathers had to send them help from their native villages. Here also the service, they said, was so hard, they were never free, and when keeping watch they were obliged to stand like statues. Under the padishah they might lie down on the grass, or even now and then take a nap. They had indeed severe campaigns to make through Anatoli against the mountain people (the Kurds), and against the Arabs beyond Jerusalem who were as black as the earth of the steppes. They had hardships enough with the Turks, but they got plenty of booty. In Turkey there was every thing that heart could wish—bread and fruit, and wood and women — but here nothing but steppe, steppe, steppe! The worst of all, however, was the quarantine duty, for they never knew exactly whom it was they were to shoot, and whom not. These men had travelled a great deal, and I amused myself some time in studying geography in their accounts; it was just like attempting to decipher some old and half-defaced inscription.

In passing through the great vineyard of Count Woronzoff, I learnt that out of the 60,000 vines, 40,000 had been destroyed during the preceding severe winter by the frost, and from this fact some judgment may be formed, as to how far the south of Russia is likely to become a wine-growing country.

There is, however, one kind of garden which is seen all round Odessa in the highest state of perfection, and which it would therefore be unpardonable to pass over, namely, the melon-gardens of the Malorassians, called from the Tartar word "*bashtans*." They are found all over the south of Russia, the Crimea, and the Ukraine; among the Tartars of the Caucasus, and beyond the Caspian Sea as far as Great Tartary.

In these gardens are cultivated melons, cucumbers, and all plants of this species, besides onions, beet-root, and other vegetables; but the crown of the garden, and the universal favourite, is the water-melon. This excellent and juicy fruit appears to have been created with especial reference to the wants of the steppe; and as the aloes in the sandy deserts of Africa, and several kinds of cactus in the Llanos of South America, preserve the moisture so precious to animals, so does the water-melon draw from the waste and arid steppe, in the driest years, its sweetest and most refreshing juice.

This juice is so abundant that it might serve as a substitute for spring water, and indeed at every breakfast and dinner in Little Russia, along with the bread and bacon stands a water-melon, out of which every guest takes a slice, and bites it from time to time as one might sip a glass of water. The immense quantities of this fruit which are brought to market might seem almost incredible. Even in the little town of Poltova one sees whole mountains of them, and they regularly make their appearance at every table, from the highest to the lowest, and people take them in the morning as we do coffee. They are preserved fresh during a great part of the winter, by being covered with clay, and then packed closely in cellars. There are several kinds of them—some are white inside, some yellow, and some of a beautiful pink. The latter, perhaps seduced by the colour, I always considered the best.

Innumerable in these *bashtans* are the varieties of gourds, of extraordinary size, and most singular form. Some are ash-gray, like the oxen of the steppe, and as large as a sack of flour; some have dark green stripes on a light ground, and always exactly ten; some are more than an ell long,

and only one or two inches in diameter; others are very small, and look precisely like a wooden pear; while others, as if Nature wished to play mankind a trick, present, in size, shape, and colour, the most perfect resemblance to oranges. Every day I discovered among them some strange new form, and many serve for no other purpose than for playthings or ornaments.

The cucumbers grown in these gardens are also very abundant, and play a far more important part in Russian housekeeping than they do in ours. They are often served with roast meat, without any other vegetable, and in travelling I have sometimes been compelled to put up with cold cucumbers, by way of refreshment, at midnight, the larder of the inn containing nothing else. It is not uncommon, when the Russians quarrel with the Greeks, to hear them call them "Grass-green Greeks," in allusion to their custom of eating many vegetables raw; but I cannot help thinking the term more applicable to themselves. Women and girls of all classes will often, while walking in a garden, pluck a cucumber, and proceed to eat it without any dressing.

The most distinguished ornament of the *bashtan* is the sunflower, whose golden splendour enables one to recognise them afar off. They are not, however, employed merely as decorations, for, as the people of this country are fond of keeping their teeth in practice, and are scarcely ever without some kind of nut or kernel in their mouths, which they chew in the interval of their meals, the seeds of the sunflower have been brought into requisition for this purpose.

#### GERMAN COLONIES.

The particular sympathy which every German must feel in the welfare of his countrymen in a foreign land, and the general interest awakened for the German colonies in Russia in the minds of all thinking persons, who duly estimate the importance of their influence in the country, induced me, after I had spent some time in Odessa and its environs, to take up my abode in one of the nearest of these colonies, a place called Lustdorf, lying twelve versts south of Odessa, on the shores of the Black Sea.

Having previously agreed with the "Schultz" (the bailiff or overseer) of the colony, concerning my board, I mounted my horse one fine morning, and rode out to my country lodgings, in the steppe. I passed through the gardens and khutors of Odessa, and by the "Little Fountain," where the people were occupied, like the Danaïdes, with the ceaseless task of drawing water, and made my first halt at Funtal, in the garden of a rich Greek resident of the steppe. I found his whole harem, consisting both of Greek and Jewish women, in the garden, and the gardener complained bitterly of the cabals of these women, whom he was obliged to furnish with fruits and flowers, in order to escape their calumnious gossip. I could have fancied myself in the east, although the garden looked little enough like it. It had cost an enormous sum of money, as almost every tree had an artificial soil, and there were some handsome kiosks, and almost as many urns as trees. These urns had been sent for from Italy by the Greek prince, and as they were of various coloured marbles, and he chose to have them white, he had hit on the expedient of having them all *whitewashed*!

From Funtal I rode on to a Russian convent, which also, with its extensive garden, lay near the shore. It consisted of several spacious buildings



and two churches (the Russian convents always contain several churches, sometimes four or five), and the pious monks had amused themselves with forming the flower beds and the hard clay of the steppe into all sorts of fanciful shapes—crosses and stars and pyramids—little hills, platforms, and flights of steps, and hermits' caves. They possessed also a deep well, the water from which was drawn up by a tread-wheel, so arranged as to be trodden by some dogs trained to the exercise, who galloped round it like so many squirrels.

The convent lies on a sort of peninsula, on the point of which stands the light-house so important to Odessa. The glass in it is said to be English, but I doubt this, for it had many defects, and the defect of a glass in a light-house may sometimes prove the destruction of a ship, for without the defect in the glass the light would be visible some hundred yards further out at sea. The convent peninsula is considered dangerous to shipping, and, indeed, has often proved destructive when an elongation of it, in the shape of a sand-bank, that has now disappeared, stretched out to a considerable distance.

On leaving the convent I rode along a little path that ran between the high terrace of the steppe, and the sea-beach, among fallen masses of land, such as I have already described, which had gradually become covered with luxuriant vegetation, and, being sheltered from the rough winds, even in some places with shrubs and mulberry-trees.

To the left lay the foaming sea, and to the right the precipice of the steppe, inhabited by jack-daws, owls, eagles, and other birds, which had built their nests in entirely inaccessible spots. The naked side of the cliff showed clearly all the different strata, which, during the lapse of thousands of years, had accumulated upon it.

At the top lay an ell and a half of fine fat soil, and immediately beneath it the fatal bed of calcareous earth; below that some fathoms of yellow clay, then five or six of red, under this again a very thick stratum of the rotten kind of stone, of which Odessa is built, and below this again, reaching to the sea-shore, firm blue clay.

All the upper strata, even that of the stone, are penetrable by water, which never accumulates till it reaches the blue clay, and consequently all wells must be dug at least down to that level. The blue clay is the lowest stratum known, as, of course, no other than a purely scientific interest could induce any one to dig deeper, and it is continued even below the sea, which lies in it as in a basin. It forms the anchoring ground of ships at Odessa. The extraordinary uniformity of the upper surface of the steppe, can only be a consequence of the internal uniformity of geological structure.

I might easily have found a broader road to the German colony of which I was in search, but I preferred the narrow and lonely one, and rejoiced at finding a region hitherto visited by no traveller, of which I might consider myself, I thought, as a kind of discoverer. I was looking round with great satisfaction on this my maritime kingdom, hidden from all but the birds by the high wall that rose above me, when I suddenly perceived that there was one to dispute my right. A little column of smoke rose from a hut surrounded by a neat enclosure, with cattle grazing, and a modest fruit garden laid out on a fallen mass of land, which had probably occupied its present position for hundreds of years. I passed the garden-gate, when a Bulgarian colonist appeared, and immediately opened it to admit me, in

a most hospitable manner. Although the sun had disappeared from us behind the steppe, and only now illuminated the sails of the distant ships, I was not far from my colony, and could not resist an invitation to make a short halt at this interesting settlement.

The Bulgarians have the reputation of being the hardest working people in the steppe, and far more industrious than the Germans. They are also the best housekeepers among the people of different nations settled here, practise the strictest economy, and neither gamble nor drink. This carefulness degenerates in some instances, no doubt, into odious parsimony. Even when they have amassed considerable sums of money, they continue to live in mud huts, and often conceal their treasure from the knowledge of wife and children. "A Bulgarian," said a German colonist, who, it must be owned, looked only on the shady side of the picture, "works like a horse, scrapes together like a magpie, and lives like a hog." Cattle-breeding and trading in cattle are their favourite occupations, and with the exception of the great land-owners they have the largest herds on the steppe. Some Bulgarians were named to me who possessed as much as from 7000 to 12,000 oxen, and immense flocks of sheep. Besides these, they are often proprietors of the *bashtans*, or vegetable gardens.

I inquired of my host whether things went well with him, and he answered, "God be praised, we live pretty well—*bit by bit*." This is a mode of expression peculiar to the Malorossians; careless of the future, they live from hour to hour as the glass runs. And do we not all live so? Life, in all its bitterness, could scarcely be endured, did we not take up the burden piecemeal.

In the hut we found the wife of the Bulgarian, who, as it usually happens with women, had preserved the national features more unaltered than her husband. Their marriage was childless, but, in the absence of dearer pets, she played with the house cat and her consort Tom, and the feline pair occupied the snuggest place near the stove, and were evidently favourites. The apartment was, according to the custom of the steppe, strewn thickly with grass, and adorned with flowers fastened about the walls in the form of crosses. My hosts entertained me hospitably with milk, and, as I had ingratiated myself with the wife by stroking Basilus and Marie (*videlicet*, the tom-cat and his lady), she presented me at parting with a bunch of sweet thyme as a nosegay.

The Bulgarian himself was very well inclined to gossip; and to my inquiries as to how far he was satisfied with his position, and whether things had gone ill with him at home, he answered, "Oh, no; one can hardly tell how it came about, but every body was crying out 'Russia! Russia!' That was the promised land, where one could get land for nothing without toll or tax, and cows and horses, and geese and poultry, and all. My neighbours went and my brother went, and so I went, but I sometimes think I'd better have stopped at home." I bade farewell to him, and strolled on my way, but his "Russia, Russia," still sounded in my ears. It is the cry of a hundred nations of the earth who venerate the name, and of a hundred others who fear it.

At the boundary of my German colony of Lustdorf I found a beautiful spring, which had been the subject of litigation between the convent and the colony. The suit had been carried for decision to St. Petersburg, and determined in favour of the colony. It was clear enough to render visible the blue clay at the bottom, and, though only about as thick as a man's

arm, produced a revenue of 500 rubles, paid by a wool-washer who had established himself by its side.

I reached Lustdorf just as it was growing dark, and found my two cheerful little rooms in readiness, the good people having been for some time expecting me. My landlord, the *Schultz*, appeared to be a respectable and intelligent man, with a worthy active wife, and a smart little daughter of seventeen, who promised to superintend my "home affairs." The aged mother of the Schultz, a woman of seventy years of age, was still living. She had come into the country at forty, so that her German was in the highest preservation; and she was still able to mend the stockings of the family, to peel potatoes, shell peas, pick and dress salad, and to read every evening a chapter or two in the Bible.

My landlord related to me many stories of shipwrecks that had taken place on this part of the coast, and said so much of ice and snow and frozen sailors, that one might have fancied oneself listening to the story of Captain Ross's voyages in Baffin's Bay.

In the autumn of 1836, when the sea was frozen to a distance of seven versts from the coast, a Greek vessel was driven by a strong north-easterly wind so far into the ice that it remained fast locked in. The crew gave up the ship for lost, and endeavoured to save their lives by crossing the ice to the shore. The agitation of the sea, however, communicated so much movement to the ice that it broke, and the poor sailors found themselves tossed about on various fragments, and of course in the greatest peril. A few Cossacks and some of the German colonists now, with great courage, went out to their assistance, and, having provided themselves with boards and long poles, made bridges from one mass of ice to another, and thus succeeded in saving many. It happened that the piece of ice on which stood the captain, the pilot, and one of the sailors, was separated by so wide a chasm, that it could not be reached; and as it became evident that it was drifting out to sea, they resolved to attempt to swim across. The sailor, however, was the only one of the three who ever reached the opposite side; the captain was laden with a heavy bag of money that he had tied round his waist, and both he and the pilot were overwhelmed by a mass of ice that floated towards them on the waves. They never appeared again. In the meantime it had grown dark, but, as the cries of the unfortunate sufferers were still heard from various quarters, the Cossacks continued their exertions, and saved the remainder in a boat. The sailors declared that the captain and pilot had deserved their fate, for they had wilfully run the ship into the ice for the sake of the insurance, which was more than double its value.

Another time, in the middle of October, there came on a violent storm of wind and snow, that drove all the people of Lustdorf within doors. It happened, however, that my host, the Schultz, went to his door, to have a look at the weather, when he perceived two strangers of a mournful aspect, whom he recognised for English sailors, and who gave him to understand by signs that they were shipwrecked, and that their companions had not yet gained the shore. Being mindful of the quarantine laws, he commanded them in pantomime to touch nothing, and led the way to an empty shed, where he locked them in, and his wife provided them through the windows with whatever they stood in need of. He then proceeded to rouse the inhabitants of the village, and on hastening to the shore they found eight poor half-frozen Englishmen, who were vainly endeavouring



to climb up the rugged wall of the steppe, crusted over as it was with icicles and snow. Ropes were thrown down, and some of the crew were drawn up, but others were too weak to retain their hold, and fell back again. The ship had been lifted quite out of the water, and lay on the sand with the surf breaking furiously over her. There were still on board the ship's carpenter, the pilot, and the captain, who declared that he could not leave his chest, containing his money and the ship's papers, that he was incapable of lifting it alone, and his two companions were lying exhausted, helpless, and nearly frozen. The colonists did not dare venture on board the ship for fear of the plague, and the destruction of the three seemed inevitable, when at the last moment some of the quarantine soldiers made their appearance, went on board the vessel, and fortunately were not too late to save the remainder of the crew.

Besides these "perils by sea," there were also "perils by land," and the stones of travellers lost in the steppe by night, in the snow or fog, missing the light-house, and falling over the precipice, were as numerous and as terrible as those of shipwreck.

The fortunes of the village of Lustdorf had greatly improved since the time of its first settlement, about thirty years ago, when it consisted of nothing more than a few poor reed huts, bestowed by the government on the first settlers, in which many of them perished from cold and hardship. After their experience of the sufferings of the first winter, they dug holes in the earth, and made themselves mud hovels in imitation of the Russians; and in the course of time, as their affairs improved, they found means to erect their present comfortable pleasant little houses, with large airy rooms and green blinds, surrounded by neat blooming flower-gardens.

The miseries of the early days of the settlement were described to me in lively terms by the aged mother of the Schultz, as I accompanied her to church on the morning after my arrival, which happened to be Sunday. The journey through Russia from their native country had lasted a year and a half, two summers and one winter, and had been attended with very great hardships. Many of the Germans had died before they had taken possession of the promised land. The emigrants had divided themselves into two parties, one going over Vienna, Moravia, and Galicia, wintering there, and then continuing their journey through Podolia; the other party going down the Danube. The latter had suffered most, for by the time they reached the mouth of the river an infectious disease broke out among them, which proved fatal to many. When at last the wanderers arrived at the end of their weary journey, they found land indeed, as they had expected, but the houses were uninhabitable, and the agricultural implements supplied were so bad as to be quite useless. The emigrants were totally ignorant, not only of the character of the country, but even of its latitude and geographical position, had no idea when to plough or to sow, or what to sow, and could learn none of these particulars from the Russians, for they knew not a word of their language. The more opulent of the emigrants were obliged to procure Russian servants, and trust entirely to their management, and the poorer to imitate blindly whatever they saw done by their richer neighbours, until their own experience had taught them better.

The liman lying nearest to that on which the village of Lustdorf is situated, and marked on our maps as the *Sukhoi Liman*, is so thickly sown all round its banks with settlements, that it looks like a lake in

Holstein. At the upper part, where it divides into two branches, on the tongue of land between them is situated the great German colony of Little Liebenthal; on the right lies the village of Alexandrowsky, inhabited by Greeks; on the left a Russian village, known by the promising appellation of "*Rascal Valley*," (*Burlaktshi Balk*), and at the head of one of the branches the little Russian village of Sukhoi Liman. Besides these there are many fishermen's huts, and the estate and country-house of the Countess Potocki. I know of no second instance of such a dense population in the steppe.

The Greek village of Alexandrowsky presents a striking contrast to the stirring, active, prosperous German settlements. The Greeks have been located here since the time of the Empress Catherine, and have received ten times as much land as the Germans, yet are invariably in debt to them, and in most instances are content to make over the land to their neighbours for a small sum, that they may be spared the trouble of farming, and be enabled to lounge away their time and money in taverns. They live in wretched hovels, and every thing in their villages appears decayed and out of order. Even the church had lost its bell, and the congregation was summoned by the strokes of a hammer upon an old broken piece of iron. The only interesting object I could find, was an old gray-headed man from Ithaca, one of the original settlers, who was the very image of the noble swineherd of Ulysses, leaning silently on his staff, in the midst of the loud boastful talkers who surrounded him. The character of the swineherd, as well as that of the sage Ulysses himself, belongs to the country, and the Odyssey is still, at the present day, a living picture of the islands and seas of Greece.

After a long drive over the Greek steppe, we again set foot on German ground, in the fields and gardens of the great colony of Gross-Liebenthal, the seat of a government whose jurisdiction extends over ten other colonies. There are four of these districts, or *Gebiete*, and they contain altogether about 25,000 inhabitants. All these colonies of Southern Russia are under the authority of a colonial committee in Odessa, of which a Russian general is the president, and for each territory an inspector is appointed, who communicates with the committee. These inspectors are also Russians, but the Schultz, or chief of the village, is always a German, and is chosen by ballot by the community. All discussions concerning public affairs are carried on in general meetings of the inhabitants, called together by the sound of a bell, on which occasions also are promulgated all ordinances of the higher powers.\* Every territory possesses lands in

\* The Colonial Committee is in communication with a colonial department, which forms a branch of the Ministry for the Interior at St. Petersburg. The greater part of the German colonies are in the following provinces:—In the government of St. Petersburg about 5000 souls, without, of course, including the numerous German residents in the capital; in the government of Saratoff, on the Volga, 100,000; in Little Russia and in New Russia, 40,000; in Bessarabia, 30,000; on the steppes and about the Sea of Azoff, 50,000; in the Crimea, 5000; and in the Caucasus, in the valley of the Kur, 5000: in all about 250,000 German colonists. In the central part of the empire, in the ancient Muscovy, where the population is sufficiently dense, there are no colonies, nor in Poland, or the Baltic provinces, where the government had no land to give away. The most wealthy of these colonists are those about the Sea of Azoff, on the banks of the Molotshna, or Little Milk River. Among the peasants there, some are said to possess as many as 20,000 sheep, and they all of them live in excellent houses. When the Emperor Alexander, on his way

common, with orchards, vineyards, fisheries, and sheep-walks, and from the produce of these estates are formed savings banks, which are of great service in times of scarcity.

The sheep we saw were all Merinos, or of some other fine breed, and the orchards promised such an abundant crop, that the trees had to be propped up under the weight of their rich burden. It is observed that the trees in these gardens spread out their roots as far as possible in a horizontal direction, forming an entangled net work along the surface of the ground, and seem to delay as long as they can the fatal contact with the calcareous stratum beneath. The slightest declivity, by increasing the depth of the rich upper soil and affording some shelter, produces a marked improvement in the character of the vegetation.

to Taganrog, rode through the Molotshna country, he exclaimed, in perfect astonishment, "Children, we have no occasion now to travel to Germany; we have more than Germany within our own empire."

The colonists form a peculiar class in the empire, being in the enjoyment of many valuable privileges, having their own tribunals, being exempt from the conscription, and liable to fewer taxes, than the population generally. They do not, indeed, enjoy all the advantages of the *inostranzi*, or foreigners, for these have all the advantages, and are liable to none of the burdens of natives.

All the colonies are looked on as forming one great confederation, though, in many respects, owing to the distance between them, the connexion is a very slight one; still it is not merely a nominal one, for a clergyman will sometimes remove from one colony to another, and there are always a number of beggars, who stroll from colony to colony, and bring tidings to each of the weal or woe of the sister communities.

When the colonies were first formed they were not, of course, all endowed alike. Those in South Russia generally received sixty *Dissiateens* of land for each family, and an "advance" of two cows, two oxen, two horses, agricultural implements, and a small sum of money, the amount of which became afterwards a debt due from the colony. The sixty dissiateens of land are never to be divided, but always to continue one property, for which the colonists are to pay a yearly rent to the emperor, not at present amounting to more than fourteen rubles for each male. The whole revenue derived by the emperor from the German colonies may amount to about 2,000,000 rubles annually. Though the law prohibits a division of the lot of ground assigned to a family, there is nothing to prevent several families from settling on it, if they can draw a subsistence from it.

The German colonists were called into the country, partly to serve the Russians as models in agriculture and gardening; and though many seem to doubt whether this object has been in any way gained, I am by no means disposed to share in those doubts. It is a common thing to hear the Russians in the vicinity of a German colony say, "*Tak i Nyemtsi sdälaiut*," (that's the way the Germans do), and this alone would be enough to convince me that the example of my countrymen has not been altogether thrown away. That the Russian empire, however, has made a valuable acquisition in the 250,000 Germans whom it has induced to settle within its limits, is a question to which I cannot hesitate about the answer. The farmers on the steppe are not certainly such farmers as we see at home; they smack of the steppe; but it is impossible to carry on farming in a country which is by nature a desert, with the same care and success as in a country that is by nature a garden. Still the German husbandry on the steppe is far superior to any that the steppe ever saw before the Germans came there. The Germans are the first that ever attempted any systematic measures for counteracting the ravages of the locusts. The Germans have been the great extirpators of the snakes, by which the country was formerly infested to a fearful extent. When there is famine in the country it is always to the Germans that the improvident Russians look for the means of subsistence. The Germans till the fields that the Greeks and others of their indolent neighbours would leave fallow. The Germans are never in arrear with their taxes; and what capital they accumulate is always employed in useful undertakings. It was not without good reason that a German colonist once proudly said to me, "When the emperor comes into this country he cannot but rejoice to see us here: he must own that it is to us Russia owes the cultivation of the steppe!"



## NAVIGATION OF THE DNIESTER—TROGLODYTES.

We took a boat at a place called Mayak,\* and rowed slowly down the Dniester, till we entangled ourselves in the forests of reeds that clothe its banks. These seemed at first silent, melancholy, and lifeless; but no sooner had a pair of eagles made their appearance than there arose on every side such a rushing, screaming, and fluttering of wings, that it was evident they were fully peopled. Ducks shot forth from the banks into the open water, pelicans darted from among the reeds, herons plunged in, seeking concealment among them, and the cries of hundreds of others continued as long as the eagles were in sight. At this part of the river, only just above the point where it swells into a liman of from four to eight miles in width, it narrows to seven and a half French feet. The rapidity of its course is here very great, from three to four feet per second, whilst in the liman it is all but stationary. Immediately before its mouth in the liman there is a sand-bank with only a few feet of water, so that ships can neither go in nor out; but a deep narrow arm of the liman runs backward in a direction nearly parallel with the river, and this has been brought into connection with it by means of a canal.

The navigation of the Dniester is very unimportant, for there is scarcely any thing to be seen on it but rafts, and a kind of craft that is but little better, on which wood is brought down from Bessarabia and Gallicia, besides some wooden wares manufactured among the Carpathians, a little wheat, and plaster of Paris. One-half of these goods goes to Akerman, the other half by land to Odessa.

We landed on the Moldavian side of the river, and commenced our return journey to Lustdorf, but remembering Herodotus, we resolved to seek a night's lodging among the Troglodytes of the steppe. The abodes of the inhabitants of this country are precisely what they were in his days, for nature here has remained the same, and building materials have not become more plentiful since the time of the father of history.

To avoid the heats of summer and the cold of winter, and economise as much as possible so precious an article as wood, they dig holes of twelve or fourteen feet deep, and of the required length and breadth. At each end, and in the middle, they place an upright beam, and across these three a horizontal one. From this, sloping to the ground, on either side they lay reeds and branches, and then cover the whole with turf and mud; after which the roof of the *semlanka* is complete. It is, of course, soon overgrown with grass and weeds, and to any one coming from the north such a dwelling looks only like a little unevenness on the ground. Towards the south the wall rises out of the ground to the height of about six feet; it is plastered with clay, and small pieces of glass are stuck in for windows, so that the whole habitation, with its window just peeping above the ground, looks like a *seedling* house that has lately sprouted up. The people who inhabit these "*semlankas*," as they are called, live as snugly as so many moles, the stormy winds of the steppe raging over

\* This place is a colony of *Raskolniki*, or old-believing Russians, whose ancestors in ancient times fled from the persecution of their own countrymen, and sought shelter under the more tolerant sceptre of the Mussulmans. There are many similar colonies in the provinces that formerly belonged to Turkey. The most remarkable, perhaps, is that of the Nekrassoff Cossacks.

their heads without their ever feeling them. A flight of steps covered in, and provided with a door at top and at bottom, leads down to the house from the ground above. The sheds for the domestic animals are constructed in a precisely similar manner. The cattle have, indeed, in many cases nothing more than a square hole, open at the top; but horses, pigs, sheep, fowls, and ducks, have each their separate dwellings of proportionate size. The poor ducks of the steppe are denied the recreation of ponds, and are forced to put up with about a painful of water poured into a hole two feet long by one broad, and lined with clay.

Barns for corn are net to be seen in any part of South Russia. The sheaves and the hay lie in great heaps round the house, but the threshed corn is preserved in conical holes dug in the ground, in which some straw is previously burnt to render it perfectly dry. A certain quantity for daily use is kept inside the house, in a huge basket, containing at least eight bushels, but in both cases it suffers from the depredations of mice. During the summer the cookery is all carried on in an open hole, to which a flight of steps leading down serves, at the same time, for a resting-place for the cook.

It was at a Troglodyte household of this kind that we now claimed hospitality for the night, and I was agreeably surprised to find the neatness and cleanliness of the inside of the house so far exceeding the promise of its exterior. The ground was strewn with grass, the walls decorated with sweet herbs, the benches with gay and handsome coverings, and the beds amply provided with pillows neatly arranged. The image of the saint also was duly honoured with its little lamp and embroidered curtains. In an opposite apartment was a goodly store of household utensils, and along the wall was a row of holes neatly painted, in each of which sat a brooding hen.

The moment we had announced to our host, evidently to his great satisfaction, our acceptance of his kind invitation, he began his preparations to entertain us to the best of his power. Our horses were turned out to graze on the steppe, a fire was lit in the hole above described by the wife and mother, the son set about pounding the millet for the favourite national dish, and we soon had on the table a capital supper, including omelets and most superb milk. While we were in the midst of our enjoyment of this excellent fare, we suddenly heard without the clattering of hoofs and the rattle of arms, and there entered a Cossack from beyond the Danube, who claimed, like ourselves, the hospitality of our good-natured Troglodyte. It was immediately granted, and the Cossack and his horse were added to the number of the guests. I was delighted to fall in with a Cossack under circumstances so congenial to his habits, and accordingly cultivated his conversation diligently. He wore behind his ears great bunches of flowers mixed with grass, that he had plucked as he rode along over the steppes. His horse, his sabre, his pistols, and his uniform, had all been bought with his own money. His name he told us was "Yephim Affanassievitsh Lesharno;" he was born at a village near the Danube; his father was a rich man there, possessing fifty cows, two hundred horses, and many sheep. He added, that his father sent him every month twenty silver rubles, so that he was not obliged to starve on his pay, though he had every thing to provide for himself.

Our kind hosts would fain have turned themselves out of their beds in order to accommodate us, but we insisted on their occupying them as

usual, had an excellent night's rest on some straw in the other room, and the next morning, as soon as the sun darted his rays along the high grass, we departed with an excellent breakfast and a thousand good wishes.

My last considerable excursion from Lustdorf was directed to the towns of Ovidiopol and Akerman, and the mouth of the Dniester liman.

As far as Ovidiopol we met with grass and grass, and nothing but grass, and more than one half of the town itself consists of *semlankas*, such as I have just described. It had a short period of prosperity when the left bank of the Dniester had been joined to Russia, whilst the Turks still possessed the right; but since Akerman has also become Russian, this prosperity has declined. In the fortress, which consists of a gigantic mud wall and ditches, there are but fifteen Cossacks, and the roofs of most of the buildings belonging to it have fallen in.

We entered the post-boat here, in order to cross the liman to Akerman, with a crowd of other passengers. I inquired of the Russian skipper how long the passage would probably take. "How do I know? As long as God pleases," was the answer. "Certainly. Quite right," I replied, "but how long should you suppose?" "How can any man tell? God makes the weather!"

These were the true country answers, such as one almost always receives, and before long we had a proof that our skipper was not far wrong in his philosophy. A little cloud, which on our setting out had seemed to hang quite innocently on the opposite side of the liman, began soon to develope itself in a threatening manner, and before we were half way across we were met by a violent storm. The wind had raised such great clouds of dust from the steppe, that the town of Akerman, that a little while before had been full in sight, disappeared from our eyes; the direction of the wind suddenly changed, and as we were quite unprepared for such an occurrence, we should have been upset in a moment, had not fortunately some ropes given way, and our whole rigging gone overboard, so that we drove without mast or sail before the storm. A young Polish nobleman, who had put on a very anxious look, while the weather was yet fair, now gave himself up for lost, and broke out into bitter lamentations. He could not bear the sight of the sky and the water, but lay down in the bottom of the boat, and hid his face in his leathern travelling pillows, but every moment kept jumping up again and gazing fearfully at the waves, which were as black as pitch. Now he said his prayers in Polish, and now in French, declaring all the while that he did not care for himself, only he grieved for the sake of his good mother, and his poor peasants, and there-upon he began again so piteously to bewail his hard fate, that his servant, who had hitherto been eating contentedly enough his bread and bacon, now bethought himself to cry with his master. I told him to be of good courage, for that the other people in the boat by no means considered our case as desperate. "Ah" he replied, "*Ces gens là vous perdront leur vie pour une verre d'eau de vie. O ma mère! hélas mes pauvres gens!*"

Our situation was really uncomfortable enough: our boat was in a deplorable condition, the heavens were as black as ink, the dark muddy water of the liman boiling like a sea, no shore was to be seen before or behind us, and worst of all our sailors were Russians!—We were also aware that at this Dniester-ferry, the post-boat had more than once gone down with all that it contained.

After a little while, however, the storm began to abate, we got up a bit



of a sail, and in the evening we arrived at Akerman safe and sound. Even our Pole, after he had properly dried the outward man, and moistened the inward with a glass of Greek wine, became another creature.

The German sound of the name of Akerman is entirely accidental, since it is composed of two Turkish words signifying "white town." As the city enjoys a privilege of exemption from the plague of passports, its population is continually increasing, and cannot be less than 13,000, for, according to the police-master and the German apothecary of the place, the names of 8000 men are inscribed in the city books. It is absurdly rated in the St. Petersburg almanack as at 2500, whilst there are at least as many houses. The place has exactly the appearance of a great beaver city, or of one built for the court of the river gods of the Dniester. The houses, with very few exceptions, are low and built of reeds, and the streets, running over an extent of two miles in length, by a mile and a half in breadth, wind like rivers, so that one can never see twenty paces before one. During the storm of the preceding day, it was evident they had in reality been turned into water-courses. The town of Akerman is situated in too remote a corner of the civilized world, for the use of glass for windows to have yet become general, and many of the houses receive the light only through a piece of bladder. The place has always had the fortune to lie at the uttermost extremity of the empire to which it belonged. It was the most distant colony of the Romans in these regions; it fell in the north-eastern limit of the Turkish dominions, and belongs now to the extreme south-western possessions of the Russians. Of the Roman sway no trace is any longer visible, unless perhaps the foundations of an old fortress, in the centre of one of whose courts rises a Turkish minaret, whence there is an extensive view of the town. The finest buildings in it at present are a Russian barrack and the prison, which are both so decorated with columns that they look like Grecian temples. It has, like most of the cities in this part of the world, a medley population, composed of Asiatics and Byzantine Greeks, Jews, Armenians, Germans, Frenchmen, Bulgarians, and Moldavians; the last named, however, though the city is situated in Moldavia, form the smallest portion. The majority of the inhabitants who occupy the reed-houses, make use of neither tables, chairs, nor benches, but live in the true Oriental style, with divans and carpets.

A wretched little boat, a *kayook*, made of a few rough boards nailed together, without even a rudder, served to convey us from Akerman to Bughasi, a village near the mouth of the liman, inhabited only by Catholics, for the sectarian animosities which separate them from the Protestants, amongst whom they include the Russians, are unfortunately as rancorous in this sequestered spot as in any other part of the world. Our boatman caught up a bit of wood that was lying on the shore to supply the place of a rudder, and off we set, but a fresh breeze from the sea lashing up the waters of the liman, made the passage in our little nutshell very rough, and as we could not tack, we were forced to land considerably higher up than we wished, and walk back a few versts along the shore.

In all the maps I have ever seen of this region, this liman is represented as an open bay, whilst it is in reality closed like all the rest by a peres-sip, broken by two gheerls, the western one, through which the vessels enter the liman, being very deep and a verst broad. As the sea-water

only enters these gheerls during violent gales from the south, the water in the liman is generally fresh, and contains fresh-water fish. Along the whole peressip runs a range of fisherman's huts, where we proposed on the first night of our arrival to seek a lodging, having previously furnished ourselves among the *Galaktophagi* with milk, eggs, bread, &c., since we knew that the herds kept by the *Ichthyophagi* yielded none of these commodities.

We sought out the largest of the huts, and begged permission from the master, who was a Greek, to spend a night in it. The sun unluckily was already set, and we could not witness the fishing, as it was ended for the day. We were therefore obliged to content ourselves with inquiries and conversations concerning the fisheries, and as in the course of them, I learnt many things which may help to complete the picture of the Black Sea, and which are not to be found in other books, I may as well take this opportunity of throwing together such particulars as I collected.

The most considerable fisheries of the Euxine, as far as the Russian dominions extend, are to be found at the mouths of the great rivers, the Dnieper, the Dniester, and the Danube, and in the Straits of Yenikale or Kaffa. This is natural enough, for they are the great gates before which assemble the great fish whose mode of life requires fresh as well as salt water. In the Straits the two waters exchange their wanderers, and the fish are therefore as crowded in them as passengers on a narrow isthmus between two countries.

At all these points fisheries have been established. Some wealthy Greek or Great Russian will hire a tract of the coast; build on the strand a great reed hut; purchase fishing-boats, nets, and every thing necessary; invite a party of Russians, Greeks, Tartars, Poles, or whatever people come to hand in the neighbourhood, to join him in the speculation; and establish himself for the summer, with his chance companions, on the sea-shore. The "*khosan*," that is, the man who has advanced the capital, is of course the chief, and has the largest share of the profit, but he has a cashier or book-keeper associated with him, who controls his proceedings, and represents the interests of the rest of the company.

The fish caught is either carried fresh to the markets of the neighbourhood, or salted and sold to dealers, who come from the interior of Russia, and from Poland, Hungary, Wallachia, and the Ukraine.

These huts are large and spacious, although only built of reeds, and stand so close to the sea as to be but just beyond the reach of its waves. In spring the establishment looks somewhat bare and desolate; but by degrees it assumes a more habitable appearance. The crew, consisting of about twenty men, have their beds in the huts, where they rest from their work, and smoke, and play at draughts with muscle shells and pebbles, joking and laughing the whole time, and telling the everlasting stories of which a Russian, whether cutting wood in the northern forests, hunting ermines in Siberia, sitting by the nightly fire in the steppe, or resting from the toils of the fisherman on the shores of the Black Sea, is never weary. In the background of the huts stand the fishing-boats, the great salting tubs, and a kind of mill for grinding the salt. Before all things, however, they take care to have an image of a saint hanging up over the inside of the door, and before the saint burns a little lamp, that day and night illuminates their little hut, even as their faith in the picture may be supposed to cheer their minds.

They would think themselves ruined, if, while they were at sea, this star of their hopes became extinguished. A day on which such an accident took place would be entirely lost to the fishery, for they would undertake nothing. At each side of the door stands a vessel of water, and outside there is a hearth where an old man is always employed in cooking, and other domestic operations. Should the season prove productive, and the fish throng into the nets, a visible increase takes place in the property of the fishermen. They get sheep to furnish a rôti for Sundays, fowls to lay them eggs, and dogs to watch their treasures. The sea is, however, in most cases, their only larder, out of which comes every thing that is to fill the pot. Round the outside of the huts hang the nets, fishing-lines, and other implements; and close to the edge of the surf is erected, in a sloping direction over the sea, a high mast, to which a sort of basket is attached. In this one of the party is always seated to look out for fish, and give notice of their approach. It is a delightful seat, and while thus hovering like a bird over the surface of the sea, and gazing down into the green crystal depths, a man might almost forget the race to which he belonged, and shoot down like a sea-bird on the fish sporting beneath.

The experienced eye of the fisherman contemplating the wide waters from this point would see many things perfectly, that to my ignorant landsman's sight were perfectly invisible. They not only distinguish the approaching shoal of fish from an immense distance, but are able to tell with the greatest nicety what kind of fish it consists of. Before they can see the animals themselves, they can recognize them from the shade and motion of the surface of the water produced by their play. Even their ears are not idle, for by certain sounds that rustle along the sea, they can announce a change that may have taken place in the weather at a great distance. These baskets are, indeed, the only places where a Russian learns to understand the weather, and these fishermen are the only people in the country who do not answer every question with, "God in heaven knows."

The fishermen have very peculiar names for the winds, which they have received from the Greeks. Thus the north wind is called among them the "*tramudana*," as if, as in Greece and Italy, it blew towards them across mountains; the south wind they call the "*Anatolian*," but about Odessa it goes by the name of the "*Wind of Constantinople*."

Like all frontier people, these fishermen, coming from various parts of the interior, and stopped by the natural boundary of the sea, are of mixed races. The sea itself also contributes its quota, for it is not uncommon for shipwrecked mariners to remain on the shore and turn fishermen. The general language of conversation among them, however, is the Russian.

The principal classification made by the Russians of all the fish known to them, is into red and white fish. All the fine sturgeon kinds, so frequent in the Black Sea and its rivers, are denominated "*red fish*," and the smaller races, such as herrings, mackerel, carp, perch, &c., are called "*white fish*." Besides these, there are many which belong neither to the one nor the other class, such as the shark, the dolphin, and the roach.

The most important of all these to the fisherman is the mackerel (in Russian called the *skumbria*), which furnishes him with daily bread, and sometimes even with riches. This fish rises in spring, in pursuit of another, called here the "*kapsa*," and followed in its turn by the larger "*palamida*."



If the winter is mild, and the spring comes in early, the mackerel is not considered worth much; but, after a severe season, they not only come in much larger shoals, but are infinitely finer and fatter. They are finest in autumn, when they have been feeding in the different bays and gulfs, and often come with meat an inch thick on them. At this season also the shoal will sometimes make a sudden turn and rush back, as if seized with panic terror, and then they are caught by hundreds of thousands. These sudden returns of the fish betoken a speedily approaching winter, and in two or three days afterwards the cold is sure to set in. The mackerel have very much fallen off in the Bay of Odessa, partly perhaps from the more frequent fishing for the consumption of the town, but principally from the great navigation. What is caught before June is unimportant, and is immediately sold in the markets, but the shoals then become too great to be consumed in the neighbourhood, and it is necessary to begin the salting for the interior. This operation is carried on with the utmost possible celerity, and those who perform it do not trouble themselves to cut open the fish, but draw out at one stroke the whole contents of the stomach, through the gills, as fast as young girls among us shell peas. As the mackerel is a delicate fish, and very easily spoilt, it is usual to throw the nets in the evening, and to proceed the whole night with the process of salting. The tubs are first thickly strewn with salt, and the fish then put in, in layers, exactly in the position in which they swim, each layer lying across the one below it. The tubs are then left a few days standing in the shade, the fat which collects at the top is taken off, and put aside, to be sold separately, a thick layer of coarse salt is laid over, and they are then closed, and placed in the huts till the autumn, when the Jews from Poland, and other dealers, arrive. The September fish cost from forty to fifty, but those caught earlier not more than fifteen or twenty rubles the thousand. This mackerel is sent as far back into the interior as the middle of the continent, where its farther advance is checked by encountering the salt fish from the Baltic.

The herring of the Black Sea is not found in great shoals further than the mouth of the Danube, where it is caught and prepared in a similar manner. It is possible that the great mass of fresh water brought down by that river may prevent their going further. These herrings are, in comparison with the Dutch herrings, as much smaller, as the Swedish are larger.

After mackerel and herrings the commonest fish is the turbot, but it does not appear to be equal in flavour to that of the North-Sea countries, perhaps because it is so cheap, and its squinting physiognomy meets one continually in every market.

The sharks of the Black Sea are neither very large nor very ferocious, and the Greeks are in the habit of eating them though they have, in my opinion, a most unpleasant taste. They are pursued as much for the sake of their rough skin, which is used by cabinet-makers and polishers, as for food. They are sometimes caught in nets, but more frequently with a copper hook, baited with a mackerel. As many as from twelve to twenty are sometimes caught in one night. The fat of the shark is given to the horses in the steppe, as medicine.

One of the most remarkable of the fish of the Black Sea is one, called by the Russians *bitshki*, which always produces fever in those who eat it, and which builds for its young a regular nest, like a bird. The male and

female unite their cares in its construction, gathering reeds and soft seaweed, and depositing them in small holes on the shore. In this the female not only lays her eggs, but watches them carefully, like a brooding hen, and when the little ones are hatched, they remain near the mother till they are sufficiently grown to venture alone into the world of waters.

Perhaps, while I am speaking of remarkable animals, I ought not to omit mentioning an old white-haired Russian, who served in the fisher's hut to carry water, and perform other offices, and who is worth describing, if only to rescue the painters from any charge of exaggeration in their representations of sea and river-gods, tritons, &c. Never, while I live, can I forget his rough, wild, hairy, *reedy* face, which sometimes reminded me of the peasants being changed into frogs, in Rubens's picture, in the Gallery at Munich. Sometimes the man seemed the living image of Shakspeare's Caliban. His nose was as fiery red and swollen as the muzzle of an ox; the eyes lay as deep in their caverns as those of a marmot; the eyebrows, which the creature was goodnatured enough to let me measure, hung over them *two* inches in length; the beard began immediately under the eyes, on the cheek bones, and hung down to the length of an ell over his hairy breast; even the nose was set with long bristles, like a hill planted with scattered firs, and the ears were literally as woolly as a goat's. It was consolatory to hear that this strange creature, who did not look like any thing human, was really a good fellow, and always did his work quietly, without grumbling; and the generality of these fishermen, poor as they were, were so full of wit and humour, had so many droll stories to tell, and so much genuine gaiety in telling them, that I shall long remember, with pleasure, the *soirée* which I spent with them on the sandy peressip of the Dniester.

We returned to Lustdorf the next day to dinner, without stopping to examine any thing farther on the Steppe. It had begun to rain heavily, and the Steppe is dull enough even in the finest weather. My last few days at Lustdorf were spent in collecting information from colonists, gipsies, shepherds, and horse-herds, which I found of great interest,—of greater, perhaps, than it will be in my power to awaken in the reader by my imperfect description. Gradually, however, I found that my sources of knowledge became exhausted, so I began to meditate an excursion amid new scenes. I accordingly packed up my writing-case, took leave of my worthy host and his pretty daughter, and prepared for a journey to the antique regions of Tauris.

## THE CRIMEA.

"*Di—di—dites moi,*" said a young Pole one morning, rushing into the office of Count T—, on the Boulevard at Odessa, where I was waiting, "*est ce qu'il n'y a personne ici qui parle Français?*" "*Oui, Monsieur, c'est moi qui*"—"Mo—Mo—Mo—Monsieur, *on ne me veut pas accepter!*" "*Mais où, Monsieur?*" "*Au ba—ba—bateau à vapeur!*"

The police of "Peter the Great," it appeared—that is to say, of a steamer so called, which plied between Odessa and the Crimea—had refused to receive him on account of some real or fancied irregularity in his papers. This was precisely my own case, and I was now standing with anxious looks fixed on the door of the inner apartment, waiting for the appearance of the governor, as for the rising of the sun. Our effects were already on

board, our passage paid, the fiery steed was snorting and panting on the shore, and the hands of our watches pointed to the last quarter of an hour, at the end of which "Peter the Great" would infallibly put to sea.

Dancing attendance in an antechamber is at all times disagreeable enough, but in such circumstances it is a real torment. The much-desired count, however, made his appearance at last, before it was quite too late, inscribed a few magical characters on our passports, and we found ourselves on board the boat just in time to be included in the number of her cabin passengers to the Crimea.

We found the deck as thronged with smartly-dressed ladies and gentlemen as a rout in a London drawing-room, and were considering how it would be possible for all these fine folks to be stowed away, so that there might be room to eat and sleep, and be sea-sick, when the bell gave the signal for our departure, and our holiday companions who, it appeared, had merely accompanied their friends on board, took their leaves and retired, leaving behind them the real passengers in their more simple travelling costume.

Marshal Marmont, in his travels, speaks in very flourishing terms of the situation of Odessa, and the fine view of it obtained from the sea. What is meant by a fine view of an object not really in sight at all, it is not easy to understand; and the prospect of a single row of houses, which is all that can be seen of Odessa from the sea, can scarcely be called a view of the town. There are neither trees nor mountains to make amends for its absence; nothing but the high, steep, naked shore of the steppe, with a surface as flat as that of a table.

No regret at leaving a place possessed of so few attractions disturbed our enjoyment of the lovely weather, and of the social meal which we took together on deck, envied, no doubt, by the sharks and dolphins around us. The voyage from Odessa to the Crimea is, for the good of the steward, just calculated so as to include two dinners. The fare to Yalta is sixty rubles, and the accommodation good enough for any one who knows nothing of the convenience and luxury of a *Great Western*. The boats go every fourteen days, and touch at various points to set down and take up goods and passengers.

Though the motion of the vessel was very trifling, only one of the ladies, the sister of the former governor, remained up. She sat as blooming as ever, knitting a stocking, and looking round, like a conqueror, on the recumbent forms that occupied their respective mattresses, and had hardly voice enough left to ask for help.

I held for the heroine—not the laurel wreath, but the worsted which her busy hands were weaving into a stocking, and spun with her a very agreeable thread of conversation that lasted the whole evening. How widely tea and civilization are extended now-a-days! On the inhospitable Euxine—foaming waves around, and unknown monsters beneath—were we gossiping over the cheering fragrant cup about sayings and doings of London and Paris!

In approaching the Crimea from Odessa it is by no means the nearest land that comes first into sight, but rather the centre of the peninsula, whose lofty mountain summits arose on our horizon in the gray dawn of the following morning. The sun had risen over the Caucasus of a blood-red colour, and looked like the Russian god of war, threatening the nations that inhabit it, and as he climbed higher in the east we advanced to



meet him from the west, the landscape gradually unrolling itself, till the lighthouse, built by the Russians on a low projecting point of land, came full into view.

Of the ancient Cherson no image remains but what the creative fancy forms for itself: its ruins lie too low; and of the millions of its vessels that once ploughed the deep not a vestige is left. The sea is as un-historical as possible. The most wonderful events that take place on its bosom leave not a trace for future ages—

"Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play,  
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow;  
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now."

Might it not, however, sometimes be possible to erect a naval monument? some kind of memorial to mark an interesting spot?—a buoy, or a raft with a high mast for instance, or a *columna rostrata* on the scene of a battle, decorated with the flags of the contending nations?

The Chersonesus Trachea is a perfectly flat country, if we except a very gentle slope on its western side towards the level of the sea. The mountains only begin to rise at Balaklava. The birds of passage that come from Asia Minor in the spring, come by the Crimea as the shortest passage over the Euxine. In the south of the peninsula they come to a high mountain, where they divide into two parties; the one proceeding eastward, through the defiles and deep valleys of the Khatir Dag, the other going westward over the low Chersonesus. They come in immense flocks, and their numbers give great animation to these usually wild and desolate regions. It is likely that when they are wearily winging their flight over the sea, the lonely light-house may attract them, for there are frequently many hovering about it, and the windows are often broken by their flapping against them.

We had scarcely doubled the point of the Chersonesus, when our pleasure was interrupted by an ominous order from the captain to lower topmasts and take in sail. A powerful wind arose, which soon became a violent gale, and the sea ran tremendously high, while the sun continued to shine, and the sky remained free from clouds. It was what is called a "white storm"—to me as distasteful as a white negro. A storm should be black as night, and come riding on thunder-clouds, so that one may see why there is a storm; but this sour smiling tempest destroys all comfort, without affording the enjoyment of the sublime to the imagination. The white storm upset us all, including the heroic knitter of stockings and myself, and I remained during the whole day that we were contending with it hanging over the bulwark, whilst a German fellow-passenger, a gardener on one of the emperor's estates, pointed out the several points as we passed them.

The southern coast of the Chersonesus Taurica, both with respect to climate and population, is to be considered as a separate country. The mountains of the Crimea rise gradually from north to south, and from their highest points fall abruptly and precipitously towards the sea. The tract, therefore, lying between them and the low sandy shore is peculiarly circumstanced. It is entirely protected from all the rough winds of the north, whilst it lies entirely open to the warm breezes that blow across the southern sea. It enjoys consequently an exceedingly mild climate, which allows the vine, the olive, the laurel, the pomegranate, and in short all the fruits of an Italian sky, to come to perfection. The greatest care has.

naturally, been bestowed on the cultivation of this favoured region, and its attractions have, of course, drawn towards it many foreigners—Greeks, Genoese, and Russians especially. A precipitous mountain wall with rocky peaks, 4000 feet high, separates this region from the interior, where the tribes of Goths, Tartars, and others, formerly drove their flocks over the grassy ridges to the very brink of the natural barrier, and yet remained entirely separate from and independent of the southern region.

The southern shore of the Crimea is always spoken of, even now, as a distinct country, and in the interior of Russia and in Moscow it is common enough to hear it spoken of simply as the "south-coast." "These wines are from the south coast," people will say, without mentioning that they allude to the south coast of the Crimea. It is not however to the whole south coast that the peculiar advantages I have described belong, but only to a small part from Balaklava to the defile of Khatir Dag.

The first thing that attracts the eye after passing a long strip of naked coast is a Russian convent nestled among the rocks, on the spot where stood once the temple of Diana, and where the lovely Iphigenia performed the rites as priestess. The convent did not come into sight till after we had sailed round a promontory, formerly called the "Promontory of the Virgin," where was situated the temple of Orestes! (who could bear to entertain a doubt of the truth of those delightful fables?) and after crossing the Bay of Balaklava, we came to the commencement of the lofty range of mountains, and the much-praised "south coast." On the whole, as seen from the sea, this mountain chain is not to be compared either with the Alps on the Italian side, nor with the French part of the Pyrenees. It is not sufficiently varied and broken with considerable valleys and ravines, or deep bays, nor covered with such masses of forest, the gray naked rock being everywhere too predominant, except in winter, when the peaks are covered with snow. This, however, applies merely to the view from the sea, for to the pedestrian, who sees things more closely, and more in detail, there are many exquisitely picturesque points. The bay of Yalta also makes an exception to the general uniformity of the coast, as it runs far up into the land between two lovely thickly wooded vallies. The mountains here are finely varied in their forms, the valleys richly cultivated, and scattered over with Greek and Tartar villages, and country houses; and down close by the sea, washed by its surf, lies the pleasant little town of Yalta,—decidedly the prettiest point on the coast, and built on the only spot that could have been chosen for its site. It is now the chief steam-boat station, and the centre of all the commerce of the south coast, although it was only during the summer preceding my visit that it was raised by Count Woronzoff to the rank of a town. The houses are all new, and the whole town has such a pretty toy-like appearance, that it looks just as if it were fit to be given for a plaything to a child at Christmas. There are three inns, a custom-house, a post-house, a little church, a little quay, a harbour about two miles long, two little streets, and a little apothecary's shop.

"Here we are at Yalta!" said I to my sea-sick Polish friend. "*Oui! voilà I Ya—Ya—Yalta! C'est heureux! Mais quel malheur, qu'on n peut pas aborder tout près! O Dieu! Je mourrai en passant le port!*"

The steamer could not, however, go up close to the shore, on account of the bar which crossed the harbour, and we were consequently obliged to go to anchor, and remain knocking about in the odious white storm till some

little boats arrived to set us free. Then came the rushing about to secure a place in a boat, and to look after one's goods and chattels; and then, whilst we ourselves were still staggering like so many drunken men from the effects of the sea, there were all the little marks of attention that we were bound to show the ladies. At length, our carpet-bags and trunks were tumbled into the boat, and ourselves after them, while our little cockle-shell danced upon the waves like a mermaid in Oberon. The sailors, however, had no compassion for our sufferings, but continued to make all sorts of delays, till we were driven into mutiny, and, seizing the oars ourselves, insisted on being put ashore as quickly as possible. When we reached the quay nothing was to be heard on all sides but curses on the deceitful sea, and protestations against trusting ourselves again to Peter the Great. Some declared they would send for their carriages from Odessa, and go back over the steppes; others that they would rather be jolted five days in a Russian "Extra post" than submit to this detestable rocking for another four-and-twenty hours. I felt curious to see whether these resolutions would be better kept than those of Horace's mariner.

On board the steamer I had formed an acquaintance with two young Russians, and as accident threw us into the same boat, and afterwards into the same hotel, I considered that the fates had resolved we should remain together; so as we had both formed a plan to make the tour of the Crimea in eight days, and return to Odessa by the same vessel that had brought us, we determined to make the journey in company, and set out on the following day. I, for my part, was, however, so impatient to have a peep into Tartary, that I could not wait so long, and accordingly, as soon as I had made my arrangements at the hotel, mounted a little horse, and set off, to spend the rest of the day in the mountains a Tartar hunting.

I rode on rejoicing to have found a new country. I passed between orchards through which little brooks were sparkling, and over mountain streams that every now and then crossed my path, giving my "*Salem Aleikum*," to all the men I met, and delighted to have an opportunity to dismount and help a Tartar girl up with her bundle of rice. The elegant mansions of Russian princes and generals I passed with scarcely a glance, and hastened on towards a Tartar village that I saw picturesquely perched on the point of a rock, which could be reached only by climbing a succession of terraces. The mosque lay below concealed in a grove of walnut trees. I soon saw a group of Tartars, and approaching them threw in a few words of Russian, in hopes that they would *catch* somewhere, and kindle a reply. I was not mistaken. A handsome young Tartar stepped forward and asked me what I wanted. His name, he said, was Ismael, and when I begged him to shew me into his village, and more especially into his house, he trotted cheerfully on to comply with my request, with that ready courtesy of which I have seen so many instances among these people. "*Derekoi*," the village to which we had scrambled up, was, like almost all Tartar villages, most romantically situated. The dwellings lie thickly scattered about among the trees, and leaning on one side against the mountain, so that one may ride over their flat roofs. These are large, as they supply the place of a courtyard covered with earth and small stones, laid smooth with a sort of roller, and supported on thin trunks of trees. Glass windows there are not, but in their place wooden flaps, which have a disagreeable effect, as if the houses were blind. Every house has its grove of mulberry, fig, and walnut trees, which have the double recom-



mendation of bearing fruit, and taking most beautiful and picturesque forms. Before the house was seated Ismael's sister, weaving at a handloom, a kind of fillet worn on the head by the women, and called a "marmara." She retreated as we approached, and I wished to follow her and have a peep into the house, but this Ismael would not allow.

He said it was all dirty and nasty in there; but he would take me into a better room that was kept for company, if he could only find his brother who kept the keys. Thereupon he mounted on the roof of his habitation, and began to look over all the neighbouring roofs in search of his brother. Nothing is more amusing than a survey of this kind over the roofs of Tartar houses, where all sorts of occupations are usually going on—clothes hanging out, fruits, corn or cakes being spread out to dry, and groups of people gathered in conversation, and paying and receiving visits according to the plan adopted by cats among us. In this new field of observation I found so much to attract my attention that I did not descend till the last call to prayer sounded from the Muezzin, and I saw the yellow slippers hastening from all sides towards the mosque.

On returning to Yalta, in passing through one of the little back streets, my ear was caught by the sound of a Tartar song that came from a kind of grocer's shop; I entered and found two Tartars, an Armenian, and a Circassian, handsome fellows, with formidable moustaches, and looking far more like warriors than tradesmen. How would our pale shrivelled twisters of paper bags look by the side of them? I begged to be favoured with some songs, and they immediately complied, only waiting to fetch a neighbour, who, they said, was a better singer than either of them. I made them explain to me the contents of each song. Love formed, as usual, the principal theme, but some, to my surprise, were on historical subjects. One treated of Krim-Gerei, the last distinguished Khan of the Crimea, the friend of the well-known French ambassador, Baron de Tott,—another of Khan Devlet-Gerei, — a third of the conquest of the Crimea by the Russians,—a fourth of the taking of Kasan; and though I cannot say the melodies were much to my taste, the singers themselves seemed so well pleased with them, and I found so many things to ask and to talk of, that I remained sitting on an apple chest, where I had at first taken my place, till a late hour in the night.

On the following morning at seven o'clock we were on horseback, fully prepared and accoutred to commence our eight days' campaign in the Crimea. At the windows and in the balconies we saw some of our steam-boat companions, drinking their coffee and wondering at our briskness, and we galloped off, amidst a shower of good wishes, in an easterly direction towards the ruins of an old Genoese castle, which we had fixed on as our station for the night.

Our plan was to cross the Tshatir Dagh, the highest mountain in the Crimea, to Sinferopol, the present capital; thence over Baktshiserai, the former residence of the court, to proceed to Sevastopol, the present mistress of the Black Sea, to visit the ruins of Cherson and the Cembalo of Marco Polo, and then by the western part of the south coast to return to Yalta.

You may travel in a carriage in some parts of the Crimea, the Russians having already constructed roads in several directions, but whoever wishes to have it in his power to deviate now and then from the road must go on horseback, and on horseback you can everywhere *get along* tolerably well, for the

Tartar horses climb like goats. Certain villages are appointed as post-stations, where the *onbashi*, or chief, is bound to furnish a certain number of horses to any one who can show him a firman written in the Tartar language. You meet, of course, occasionally with a strange set of cripples, but every one picks out the best he can find, and packs on the wooden saddle as many cushions as he can muster. For provisions and baggage one must be provided beforehand with large coarse bags, such as the Tartars make, and which are really very convenient. They are usually thrown over the neck of the horse, and fastened to the front of the saddle, and whoever has more goods than they will contain must tie on a bundle behind also, so that the cavalier has the air of a miller riding to market with his sacks of corn. Even Russian ladies of rank, however, submit to this mode of travelling in the mountains of the Crimea, and as the horses climb well, and appear to be quite insensible to fatigue, one soon forgets their asinine appearance.

On the road to Alushta, one beautiful estate follows another, adorned with vineyards and orchards and handsome houses, varied by thickly-wooded mountain declivities, and groups of rocks, and views of the sea. In the valley near Yalta the estates are comparatively insignificant, but higher up the mountain lies that of Marsanda, presented to the young Count Woronzoff by the Countess Brannicka, the richest Polish noble of her day, and beyond that the valley of Magaratsh, eight years ago a wilderness, but now covered with beautiful gardens and villas, it having been parcelled out and sold in small lots by the government to private individuals.

"Nikita" is a nursery for all possible varieties of trees and plants adapted to the climate of the coast. This garden was established by the government about thirty years ago. Here are about three hundred varieties of the vine, brought from all parts of the world, besides an immense collection of flowers, strawberry plants, capers, &c. The German gardener presented us with some magnificent pears, and showed us a kind of curiosity in a vegetable ruin, the decayed and mouldering trunks of some olive trees which had flourished in a garden planted by the Genoese, and over whose heads many centuries must have passed, the olive being a very long-lived tree.

In "Yursuff" we again met with a German gardener, under whose superintendence the garden had been brought to equal in splendour the mansion of the wealthy proprietor. Although the family was at the moment absent, every thing was maintained in the style of the first hotels of the nobility in St. Petersburg, and one could hardly fancy oneself in the wilds of Tartary.

These country seats on the Crimean coast are maintained at an enormous cost, and the proprietors of some estates will spend on them from 50,000 to 100,000 rubles more than the estates bring in. Whims are indulged in, to be sure, without the least regard to expense. The owner of Yursuff, for example, thought it would be a fine thing to have a fishery in his own bay, and wrote accordingly to Malta for a fisherman, to whom he was obliged to promise an exorbitant salary. As the Russians are, however, simple enough to fancy that foreigners can perform miracles, he had no doubt that the Maltese would fish him up half the sea, and discover heaven knows what treasures in its bosom. At length the nets were thrown, but not a fish would enter them. The Maltese declared it was because the nets were new, and that he must first procure a certain herb, for which he knew only the Maltese name, to rub them over, in order to entice the fish. The whole house and all the neighbourhood were roused immediately to procure

some of the magic herb, known to them only by his description. When, after long search, some was brought, that he affirmed to be the genuine, he once more cast his nets, and brought up—first, a quantity of sea-weed, and then a cargo of young sharks, and other abominations, which, much as he longed to eat fish out of his own bay, the master could not swallow, and the Maltese, who knew nothing whatever of the fishery of the Crimea, received his dismissal, after the experiment had cost several thousand rubles.

Great as was the pleasure and variety afforded by our journey, we could not be insensible to the fact that it was obtained at the cost of some inconvenience, if not of suffering. The sun was burning hot, and we not only eat all the mulberries we could find, but even devoured the leaves like caterpillars. When we reached a Tartar village, our intense thirst made us forget the warnings we had received that the fruits of the Crimea are apt to produce fever, and by eating every thing juicy that we could meet with, much increased our torment, while the bright-blue sea lay temptingly spread out in our sight, affording coolness and refreshment to millions of creatures, yet refusing to grant us so much as one quickening breeze.

We were overtaken by the night before we were able to reach Alushta. Whilst we were in Yalta, we had heard of a certain hospitable old general, Borosdin, who had lived many years on the coast of the Crimea, and who took such especial delight in entertaining travellers, that when a new road was made, passing at some distance from his house, he was as inconsolable as an innkeeper whom a new railroad threatens to deprive of the visits of the accustomed troop of guests. When therefore a Tartar pointed out an estate to us as that of a General Borosdin, we immediately rode towards it in the joyful hope of preparing an agreeable surprise to its benevolent master. We soon found, to our consternation, that this was not the *true* General Borosdin, but only his brother, who only visited the place occasionally, leaving his lands usually to the care of his steward, gardener, architect, &c. It was however by this time too late to turn back, and we resolved to try and smuggle ourselves into the house by some means or other.

Having perceived an open window with a light we rode up to it, and called out "*Bon soir, Madame,*" to an old Frenchwoman whom we saw sitting beside her husband, engaged in knitting. She did not appear at all startled, but holding her light out of the window answered, "*Dieu! que vous m'avez effrayée! Bon soir, Messieurs;*" and we immediately dismounted and presented our papers to show that we were not mere vagabonds. She was too polite however to look at them, and when her old deaf husband took them in his hand and began to study them, she snatched them away screaming in his ear, "*Mais, Charles, Charles! Qu'est ce que tu fais? Ce sont les passeports des Messieurs. Entrez! Entrez! Messieurs!*" Uniting Russian hospitality to her native French complaisance, she appeared to feel the utmost confidence in us and soon showed us to apartments, where we passed a very tolerable night, in spite of the officious attentions of certain small animals as abundant here as in Italy. The Frenchwoman and her husband were from Champagne, and had travelled thus far to fabricate the foaming wine of their own country for the master of the estate. These manufacturers of Champagne are very common on this coast, where it is from the wine that the principal revenues of the estates are derived, the juice of the grape contributing in some mea-



sure to defray the expenses of the gardens and houses. The Crimean wines are already much used in Russia, and most of the great landed proprietors have agents in Moscow, Kharkoff, Odessa, and other large towns, who write up over the doors, "South-coast wines from the estate of the Princess X.," &c. The wines of course receive various baptismal appellations, and one may buy port wines, champagne, burgundy, and madeira, all manufactured in the Crimea. The vines for each sort are however always procured from the respective countries, and, as far as possible, they are managed in the same manner; they always have a certain peculiar flavour which may be called the Crimean; but as this flavour, it is said, becomes every year pleasanter, and the wine more fragrant, it is likely that the care bestowed on it may in time place it on an equality with the growth of more favoured lands.

Alushta enjoys a very interesting geographical position. The high wall of the Crimean mountains is here broken through in a remarkable manner, by broad vallies stretching from the sea-shore in the south-east to the steppe in the north-west, sinking at the same time from the height of 4000 to that of 2000 feet, and rising again on the east, abruptly to its former height, whilst from the lower elevation the isolated summit of the Tshatir Dag, stands out towering a thousand feet above any other point of the whole range, and seemingly quite distinct from it, especially on the north and south. It is called by the Russians "Palata Gora," a name like the Tartar appellation Tshatir Dag, descriptive of its form, which is exactly that given in pictures to the Table Mountain at the Cape of Good Hope.

This form may be considered common to the mountains of the Crimea, since they all appear as high walls or ridges, intersected by vallies, but it is of course less evident where they are not isolated. The vallies or defiles which cross the Tshatir Dag from the sea to the steppe, are interesting not merely from their physical conformation, but also in an historical and political point of view. Since they are the most convenient passes through the mountains, they have naturally been employed as the principal channels of communication between the north and the south, and two not inconsiderable commercial towns have arisen, one at each extremity; Simferapol on the north, and Alushta on the south. Besides this the numerous battles fought in their defile have rendered them quite the classic ground of the Crimea.

Alushta, in the time of the Genoese, was a very populous place, and in the Byzantine period, the seat of a bishop. It possessed a large fortress, built by the Emperor Justinian, and its fame dated from several centuries before Christ. The modern Alushta, however, lies in the midst of the ruins of its former greatness, like an Arab village amongst the remains of an Egyptian temple. At the side of the town stands a large building in the Asiatic style, for the reception of travellers, where, with the exception of thick coffee, nothing is to be procured but hot water for making tea, which the traveller is expected to bring with him. One other luxury, indeed, we were able to obtain, namely—a sea bath, after which we luxuriated in the delicious sunshine which laughed over the whole region. Towards noon the Tshatir Dag began, as the Tartars say, to put his cap on; the very same expression which is used by the Swiss, when a mountain top becomes covered with clouds. As the road to Simferopol is tolerably good, and does not boast any of those natural beauties which a

traveller is bound to see, I was not sorry to throw myself into a carriage, exhausted as I was with long riding and sleepless nights. It is hard to decide, however, whether a Tartar horse or a Russian carriage is the most fatiguing.

One of our party, nevertheless, was determined to take this opportunity of ascending the Tshatir-Dagh, as he did not expect to have another chance for such a pleasure between here and St. Petersburg, and set off accordingly, with a store of bread, tea, sugar, and lemons, a cloak, and a Greek guide. We, in the mean time, prepared for a visit to the celebrated Sultan Mehemet Mirza Krimtayeff, the richest Tartar nobleman of the country, a man descended from a family distinguished at the court of the Khans, and whose lands stretch as far as Perekop, the isthmus that connects the Crimea with the main land. He has built a spacious house, and furnished it with every convenience; with divans and carpets, for Tartars, and tables and chairs, for Europeans, in which every traveller is at liberty to pass the night. There are likewise attendants, who provide for the comfort of the guests, and furnish them with every thing they may require.

The hospitable old man was unfortunately absent at the time of our visit, but we were most kindly received by his son, a person of much courtesy and refinement, and of a very dignified deportment. His complexion was very fair, his hair coal black, and his features delicate, and he wore the costume of Tartars of rank—a close caftan of blue cloth, bordered with silver. He conducted us over the house, which was handsomely fitted up in the Tartar fashion, with cushions and carpets from Constantinople, besides the more uncommon luxury of tables. It was surrounded with large orchards of the Krimtayeff apple, so celebrated in St. Petersburg and Moscow, and from which a considerable revenue is derived. It happened to be the season for gathering, and every body was engaged in plucking the rosy fruit, vast piles of which lay heaped up in barns in different parts of the garden. We also witnessed here the process of preparing the favourite syrup, called by the Tartars, "beckmess," which they make from the inferior kinds of apples. A large, round, deep pan is kept constantly boiling in the barns, where the apples are laid up in store, and such as are not thought good enough to keep are cut into pieces, and thrown into it. Here they boil to a kind of paste, which is stirred and cleared of the scum and the worthless parts, till nothing is left but a thin juice, at first light-coloured, but which afterwards becomes brown and thick, tasting very much like treacle. A cup, containing this "beckmess," is usually to be seen at a Tartar repast, and it serves their housewives instead of sugar. It is often sold in large quantities from the Tartar orchards.

From the gardens we passed into the meadows, to view the herds of buffalos, but here also we found only the sons at home. The old ones were nowhere to be found, but only about thirty or forty calves, whose countenances had already assumed the vulgar, stupid, indolent, and phlegmatic expression of their papas, and who had adopted, like them, the pleasant custom of rolling themselves in the mud. They were all lying up to their necks in a deep ditch.

Over a cup of coffee and a pipe the young Mirza Krimtayeff related to us many anecdotes of Tartar affairs, especially of those of the families of the former sultans. The fortune of the last descendant of the ancient

Khans was rather remarkable. Having left his native country, he spent some time in travelling in Europe, and especially in England, where he became a convert to Protestantism, and having married an Englishwoman, returned to the Crimea as a missionary, and settled at Simferopol. His daughter has since been received as a maid of honour at St. Petersburg.

Having still a visit to pay, on our way to Simferopol, we were obliged to exchange the society of our obliging Tartar, for that of our yamshtshik, who had already driven up to the door, and to abandon the luxurious divans for the dancing straw-bags of our jolting *pavosky*. We accordingly took our leave, with many acknowledgments of the hospitality shown us. Before leaving Yalta, we had received from the post-master a letter addressed to His Excellency the Privy Councillor, Alexander Gregorievitsh, former governor of the Taurian peninsula, who lived a few miles from Simferopol. As the letter was very large, quite a packet, we considered that it probably contained some important despatches, and it would, therefore, be most prudent to deliver it ourselves into his hands. On arriving at his estate, we were informed that his Excellency was taking his afternoon's nap, and when, after waiting a considerable time, the sleeper awoke, and we were admitted, the important despatch was opened, and found to contain—a parcel of patterns of cloth, sent by a tailor in Odessa, for his Excellency's selection! The laugh was loud and general; but whimsical as had been our introduction, we were easily persuaded to lengthen our visit. His Excellency showed us his library, filled with the best historical works, and probably unique in the Crimea. He lives at his Taurian villa all the year round, and may well do so, his house being richly furnished with whatever can contribute to the enjoyment of body or mind. Thus had we an opportunity of inspecting the luxurious dwelling of a wealthy Russian almost immediately after we had left the palace of a Tartar noble.

Our sartorial despatch afforded us abundant matter for merriment on our way to

#### SIMFEROPOL.

The town of Simferopol is entirely a production of modern times, although a small place existed here in the days of the Khans, on the site now occupied by the Tartar quarter of the town. The capital of the Khans was Baktshiserai, which lay in a little hollow in a rocky valley. The Russians, who always like every thing on a grand scale, forsook this nest, and laid out the town of Simferopol in their own taste, with streets of such a breadth that one can scarcely see across them, and in which horse races might be held without in the least disturbing the ordinary traffic. It is very central in its position, well adapted to be, as it is, the seat of the peninsular government, and contains, like all the new Russian cities, many handsome houses, decorated with green paint and rows of columns. There are here from forty to fifty German families, mostly mechanics from the neighbouring colonies—carpenters, watchmakers, painters, &c. The Tartars carry on the trades of saddlers, coppersmiths, shoemakers, and the like. The markets, especially that for fruit, appear exceedingly well furnished.

The road towards the ancient capital, Baktshiserai, leads round the foot of a promontory, and has on the right nothing but the wide monotonous steppe, and on the left a line of low, treeless, grassy hills. The country



improves, however, as we approach the town, and the landscape, featureless till then, becomes more distinct and marked, the hills are clothed with wood, and at length the road enters a very pretty valley.

## BAKTSHISERAÏ.

On the day of our arrival at Baktshiseraï, or rather at a neighbouring convent, it chanced to be the anniversary of a great festival of the church, which every year calls together half the Christians of the Crimea, and, as the day before had been a great Tartar fair, the roads were very animated, resounding incessantly with the clattering of wheels and the trampling of horses. There were but few passengers on foot, but whole troops flew past us on their little mountain steeds, and the Russian *troikas* darted like arrows past the heavy, creaking Tartar *madyars*, which drew modestly aside, to make way for their more aristocratic brother vehicles. These *madyars* are like large chests mounted on wheels, which, being never greased, make a most frightful noise. They have a hole in the front, through which only the driver can be seen, but, as they serve as travelling harems, one may sometimes catch a flashing glance from one of the fire-eyed beauties within. The handsomest equipages we met were the spacious, open waggons of the peasants from the Greek colony, in the mountains between the two towers. They were all filled with pretty, laughing faces, and high in the midst, as on a presidential chair, sat always a remarkably beautiful woman, with a fair complexion and raven black hair, dressed in black silk, richly decorated with gold ornaments. On their foreheads these Greek women wore a most queenly-looking diadem, and their arms were adorned with strings of gold ducats. They were all smiling most graciously, probably because their ears were all the time saluted by the incense of their male companions.

I was told by a Greek of our party that these people came over about twenty years ago from Asia Minor, having escaped from the outrages of the Turks at the time of the Greek insurrection, by taking refuge in Russian ships. The emperor had assigned them lands in the Crimea, where, as might be gathered from their appearance, they had prospered and grown rich. The golden clasps and diadems, however, had been brought with them from their former homes.

In all important political movements, the Crimea and the northern coast of Asia Minor have from the earliest times been accustomed to exchange inhabitants with each other. The "barbarians" passed formerly from the Taurian coast to Asia, but now the reverse takes place, and the children of the south, pursued by barbarians, find a hospitable reception among the fierce tribes of Scythia.

The word "*Baktsha*" signifies in the Tartar language "garden," and the name of Baktshiseraï would, therefore, signify "seraglio of gardens." This city was for centuries the capital of the remarkable state which formed the last fragment of the great Mongolian empire in Europe, and which, whilst throned in the Crimea, spread its unwholesome influence far over the lands of the Dnieper, the Dniester, and even as far as the Volga and the Vistula, until checked by the magical rapidity of the growth of Russia, under the powerful Catherine, the entire northern coast of the Pontus began to develop a more flourishing and prosperous condition than it had ever known before. Here in a narrow ravine in the Crimea dwelt

those mighty Khans, before whose name the ancient city of the Czars trembled each returning spring, and for whose friendship Poles, Turks, and Russians, vied with one another. Here assembled before their gates those hordes of wild horsemen, ministers of barbarism, who from thousands of square leagues scared away the beneficent plough. The Tartars have still a tender regard for this city, the memorial of their former greatness, and the Russians do not discourage the feeling in the remnant of a people from whom they have nothing more to fear.

Baktshiserai has been declared their exclusive possession, and, with the exception of official personages, no other than a Tartar is allowed to reside in it. The government has also had the good taste to bestow much pains on the preservation of the palace of the ancient Khans, once the dreaded enemies of Muscovy. The town is thickly peopled, and as full of music and song and life, of the sound of trumpets and the clang of cymbals, as if the Khans were still reigning there. It forms a most striking contrast with the two very modern looking cities of Sevastopol and Simferopol, and has so little to remind the patriotic Tartar, or the historical inquirer, of the Russian conquest, that it is easy to lose oneself entirely in the memories of the past. It lies, as I have said, in a narrow valley, affording little room for extension on either side, so that it consists of little else than one long street, with some insignificant branches. In this street, which is besides very narrow, is carried on all the trade and commerce of Baktshiserai, the central point for all the western part of the Tartar mountain country. Here in the shops are laid up in store all the productions of Tartar and even Turkish industry, and in the houses one may see most of the articles in process of manufacture. The streets in the Russian cities are of such a boundless length and breadth, that one can nowhere obtain a good view, whilst here every thing is close enough to be touched with the hand, and at every step there arises a new and characteristic picture. At the same time all sorts of things that with us are withdrawn into impenetrable obscurity, are here open to the light of day. The houses have no windows, but the entire front wall consists only of wooden flaps, which can be let down or drawn up at pleasure, and which sometimes serve as tables or boards for goods. In one house you may see a baker at work preparing his dough, and pushing it into the oven, the warmth of which can be felt in the street. In the next you may overlook all the manipulations required in the preparation of the Turkish beverage entitled "*boussa*," all the process that is deemed necessary to give it the true flavour. Here, in a section of a house, sit a tailor and his journeymen, stitching busily away, and quite regardless of the curious eyes that are watching their proceedings. There is unveiled the entire organisation of the kitchen of a cook's shop. The saucepans steam, and the savoury roast lamb sends forth its inviting odours to salute the nostrils of hungry passers by. No poisonous messes can be cooked in such kitchens as these, and the stranger, after satisfying himself as to the cleanliness of the *cuisine*, may stop, take a plate of soup from the kettle that is always kept boiling, and may then provide himself with a slice of roast lamb, with which to amuse his leisure as he trudges along. In some houses may be seen families of gipsies, carrying on the trade of smiths, the father wielding the hammer, the mother blowing the bellows, and the children bringing coals, tongs, and water. In every shop the entire stock is spread out before the eyes of the purchaser, and he can see at a glance the quantity and quality of all the goods he

has to choose from. The most attractive in appearance are the saddlers with their whips adorned with silver wire and red morocco, and the fruit shops heaped with the rich produce of the valleys and the southern coast. This publicity of all household arrangements of course makes the streets far more interesting to a stranger than ours, which are mere channels of communication. In the east they are theatres for the transaction of all kinds of business, and a daily newspaper could never become necessary to a Tartar, for nothing passes behind the scenes. All kinds of news run warm from mouth to mouth, and a man may enjoy the pleasures of a *Diable Boiteux*, without the necessity of becoming one.

The former palace of the Khans has been not only repaired, but even restored by the Russian government, and some of the apartments are beautifully fitted up in the oriental taste, for the reception of distinguished guests. It is also by no means difficult for strangers of inferior rank, if they are furnished with tolerable introductions, to procure admittance into the palace. My companions, who arrived before me, had already taken possession of some pretty chambers, richly provided with carpets and curtains, whilst I was still parleying with the sentinel for my admission. Food, attendance, and so forth, one must of course find for one's self. The outside of the palace is by no means striking, as it is surrounded by a high wall, and has the appearance of a convent, but the interior is very pretty, with airy courts and gardens, terraces, and cool splashing fountains, and flower beds that fill the air with fragrance. In the gardens we found a magnificent vine planted by the Khans, and still loaded with superb grapes; and from a tower of the Harem, the stately prison of their women, we obtained a good view of the city, which from this point looked like a forest of minarets, tall chimneys, and poplar trees.

The quarter of Baktshiseraï, inhabited by the gipsies, is the most remarkable exhibition of dirt, poverty, and misery imaginable. The wigwams of a tribe of American Indians must certainly be very superior habitations. They live like jackals in caves hollowed out by water, or under wretched little sheds made of mud and reeds plastered up against the rock. The girls and boys run about stark naked till they are quite grown up, and then only hang round themselves a few scanty rags. At night, when their fires are kindled all over the mountain, and their dark figures are seen moving about busily engaged in the cookery of hedgehogs, crows, rats, and such like favourite dainties, their rocky abodes have a wildly picturesque and romantic appearance.

In the burial-place of the Khans I found many memorials strikingly at variance with our notions of these barbarians; so many traces of humanity and piety, that I felt more strongly than ever, how imperfect are the records of history. Every traveller in the Crimea is sure to have been well instructed in the stories of the desolating ravages of the Tartars; of their plunderings and murderings, of how often they have burned Moscow, and struck terror into Vilna and Warsaw; but if asked where their remains were likely to be found, he would scarcely imagine such peaceful consecrated resting-places, such neatly-executed white marble monuments, shaded by vines, and other trees; the spaces between filled with shrubs and flowers, and the tombs bearing inscriptions that might almost lead one to imagine these wild Khans had been all of them philosophers and original thinkers. Every monument appeared to have been constructed to embody a leading idea. For instance: Devlet-Gerai Khan, had one built



without a roof, because "he considered the Heavens so beautiful and sublime, that even from his grave he would wish to look towards the firmament, the abode of God." Another had had his tomb entirely walled up, because, as the inscription ran, "he did not feel himself worthy to be shone on by the least ray of God's sun."

On the grave of another, Toktamuish-Khan, a vine was planted over his head, "that he, who in his life-time had brought forth so little fruit, might at least in death be more productive." Selim Gerai Khan has had himself buried under the eaves of the roof of the mosque, that, "as the rain dripped down upon him, this water from heaven might wash away the foulness of his sins, which were as many as the drops falling from the clouds."

## SEV ASTOPOL.

No traces of the past are to be found about Sevastopol,—every thing is fresh, smart, and bran new. The view of the city from a distance is very fine, its handsome buildings and churches rising as if directly out of the sea, whose waves, after roaring and dashing without, find shelter within the walls, and in spacious basins. These tranquil and secure harbours reflect the busy movements of forty or fifty thousand people in perpetual active motion on land and water. It is absurd to find in our statistical tables Sevastopol rated as possessing only 5000 inhabitants, whilst there are never less than 10,000, and there have now been, for some time, no less than 30,000 troops encamped round the city to work at the fortifications, without counting the crews of the numerous ships of war constantly stationed here. The effect of all this warlike animation and bustle was greatly heightened to us by the contrast with the silence of the Tartar villages, imbosomed in fruit trees, through which we had passed in approaching it, while the immediate environs of the town are entirely destitute of trees, and as bald as the pate of a Mussulman. A few days before our arrival, the Russian fleet had returned from the Caucasus, and it exhibited many traces of the contests in which it had been engaged with the tempests and the Circassians. We sailed past a fine frigate, lying in quarantine, in which the sailors had hung up their eight hundred jackets and trousers in the rigging, to purify them from the plague, and the enormous ship-of-the line "Warsaw" was visible at a distance, dancing on the waves like a cockle-shell. The greater part, and the best of the fortifications of Sevastopol, date only from the reign of the present emperor; the materials have been furnished by the soft limestone found in the neighbourhood, which a good deal resembles the shell limestone used in the building of Odessa. It is of so yielding a texture that balls would remain sticking in it as in sand. It would be, however, so much the more vulnerable to the attacks of time, as may be judged from the houses of Odessa, which are already falling to decay. For the present every thing in Sevastopol is of course straight and in order, and it would afford a secure place of refuge for the Russian ships, should they ever be driven by English gunpowder from the Dardanelles.

One of the officers of the fleet had the kindness to take me in his handsome yawl, to see what was, perhaps, one of the most remarkable things in Sevastopol, the marvellous docks now building for the navy. Nature has, indeed, freely contributed to this giant work, by preparing a long straight deep bay, protected on all sides. Nevertheless there yet remained enough to be done. Thousands of workmen have been employed on these

docks for upwards of five years, and they have cost I know not how many millions of rubles. The stone chiefly used in the construction of these docks is a beautiful, almost snow-white limestone in immense blocks, than which nothing can look better as long as they are new. Here and there a few blocks of granite may be seen. To estimate such works as these, one must see them while they are in progress, for afterwards the water admitted covers a great part of the work. Some even of the subordinate parts are astonishing enough; as, for instance, the machinery for pumping out the water, the draining and fortifying a small low tract of the neighbouring shore, and then the enormous extent of the basins themselves, in which such swans as these giant frigates are to swim. In the vicinity of the docks lie some old ships-of-the line that serve for habitations for the work men, and I was told that no less than 2000 were lodged in one of them.

#### THE BAIDAR VALLEY—ALUPKA—THE STEAMBOAT.

At Balaklava, a town built on a tract of land bestowed by Catherine the Second on a colony of Greeks, by whom it is exclusively inhabited, we obtained post-horses, and proceeded through a torrent of rain as far as the valley of Baidar, which has the reputation of being, as in fact it is, one of the most beautiful in the Crimea. It is a large, elegantly-formed oval basin, enclosed within mountains crowned with woods, and containing twelve villages imbosomed in groves of fruit trees, and situated in meadows which the moisture from the neighbouring mountains preserves of a lovely green. It happened, however, that we ourselves received so large a share of this beneficent moisture by the way, that we arrived wet to the skin, and were glad enough to get a night's shelter in the house of a hospitable Tartar named Ali Mustapha Oglu. He gave up to us his best room, and made a bright fire that soon dried our wet clothes, and sent a fresh supply of vital warmth through our benumbed limbs, so that we felt like Socrates, as he laid aside his fetters, that nothing in the world bestows so keen a relish of the joys of life as previous suffering. No place could be more delightful, after our cold wet ride, than the warm, soft carpeted and cushioned Tartar room, which resembled nothing so much as one enormous bed.

What is the rest afforded by a European chair, compared with the luxury of one of these Oriental divans? The fire was made in a corner of the room, on the ground, some hard-beaten clay serving for a hearth. The Tartars have neither fire-place, nor stove, nor *brasero*, but a chimney hangs in the shape of a funnel low down over the fire, and draws up the smoke and vapour.

The wedding of a sister of our host had taken place shortly before, and from the beams of the ceiling were still hanging some of the handkerchiefs richly embroidered in silver thread, which the Tartar girls prepare for these occasions, to decorate the festive chamber. These pretty draperies glittering in the light of the fire, the voluptuous softness of our couch, and the feeling of indescribable comfort occasioned by the contrast of our present with our recent position, gave greater charms to our little room than could have been found in any European hotel. Besides our other accommodations, we had even a superfluity of attendance, for, in addition to what we had brought with us, our host and his two sons remained constantly

standing at the door, ready to execute our behests. His brother-in-law, however, who had come from a village in the neighbourhood, entered the room, and joined our company. We inquired of him how many wives he had, and his answer was— "Of course only one! No Tartar has more than one wife—except such as are rascals;" so that it appears Mahomet's indulgent permission to have four is made but little use of. The injunction to make a pilgrimage to Mecca is also much neglected, a circumstance not to be wondered at, when we consider the complete isolation of the Mahometans of the Crimea, surrounded as they are by Christian nations, and cut off by a wide sea from their Moslem brethren.

While we were indulging ourselves over our pipes, our new acquaintance related to us the story of a law suit, in which he and the people of his village were engaged with a Russian, who had long been regarded as the scourge of the country. He had received, by a grant from Catherine, 700 acres of land in this valley, and had gradually encroached on the possessions of his helpless neighbours, enclosing the woods and meadows, till his estate amounted to 20,000 acres. Even this was not all, for as the terms of the grant were not very precise, he maintained that he had also a claim on the labour of the peasants in his neighbourhood. The poor villagers had undertaken to have the cause tried in St. Petersburg, but had as yet not been able to obtain any decision.

At sunrise on the following morning our little Rosinantes were once more in readiness before the door. We took leave, with many thanks, of our kind entertainers, and began to climb the eastern heights enclosing the Baidar valley, trotting along narrow, crooked, rocky paths, only passable for the mountain horses of the Crimea. By the way, a little fat Russian servant whom we had with us, fell off, and remained sticking among the bushes while his horse ran away. A Greek, who had dismounted to assist the Russian, thoughtlessly left his steed at liberty, which also set off at full speed. We, the cavalry of the party, of course gave chase to the run-aways, and succeeded in catching one horse, but the other scrambled up the rocks like a chamois, and disappeared in the clouds. After various ups and downs, we reached the eastern brow of the mountain, where the descent is abrupt to the sea-shore. It is so steep, so almost perpendicular, that it appears at first impossible to get either up or down; but in one place, where two enormous rocks meet and form an angle, there is a narrow path like a winding staircase, by which, turning every four steps, and clinging to the shrubs growing at the sides, we reached at length the bottom of the rock. This path is called the Scala, and is considered one of the marvels of the Crimea.

Alupka is the name of a Tartar village, and of an estate of Count W—, who has built himself, here on the southernmost point of the Crimea, a castle renowned far and wide for its architectural and Hesperian splendours. The mere designs for this building and the gardens, made by architects sent for expressly from London, are said to have cost 60,000 rubles. The whole is not expected to be completed under seven millions of rubles, and will probably amount to much more. The year before our visit the empress had been expected, and the castle had been hastily fitted up in a temporary manner for her reception, workpeople being sent for from Odessa, and all the country round, and maintained for four weeks at an expense of eight thousand rubles a-day for wages only.

After these stories of the enormous sums expended on it, we were rather



disappointed in the castle and park of Alupka. It is built in the Gothic style, with marble found in the vicinity, of a greenish cast, so that it does not rise well out of the landscape. The large windows do not accord with its Gothic character any more than the immensely spacious and lofty apartments of the interior. The dining-room is, indeed, magnificent—a banquetting hall fit for kings and heroes; but the books, pictures, &c., are by no means remarkable. The greatest fault, however, is undoubtedly the situation, with a mountain 4000 feet high immediately behind it, and no prospect in front but the gray desolate sea, for the four or five hundred feet of garden between are placed on a steep declivity, of which nothing can be seen from the windows but the tops of the trees.

At the end of the park lies the Tartar village of Alupka, and there we again felt ourselves quite at home. The cottages are scattered up and down, in a most picturesque manner, among the rocks. On the top of one stands the handsome new mosque, built by Count W. for his Tartars. One of our party had the temerity to lift the corner of the veil of a Tartar woman who was passing, to get a peep at her face, but had nearly paid dearly for his ethnographic-psychological experiment, for the lady took up a great stone and hurled it at him, and he only escaped by a leap to the other side of the road. We reproached him for his ill behaviour, and took thankfully the lesson we had learned at his expense.

From Alupka to Yalta there is a good road, six hundred feet above the level of the sea, and some thousands below the summit of the mountain. Some miles beyond Alupka it becomes very beautiful—sea, wood, rocks, and fine country houses, belonging to the Russian nobility, forming exquisite pictures, varied by Tartar villages, seeming to hang in air. We could soon distinguish from afar the steam-boat lying in the roads of Yalta, and rejoiced at having so exactly hit the time, and spent so well our six days. In Yalta we again met with the acquaintance we had left, and drank a social glass of wine in happy ignorance of the vexation which the morrow was to bring forth.

We had been told, at the office of the steam-boat, that the captain was preparing to set off at five in the morning, instead of twelve, as had been proposed, on account of having to stop at Sevastopol, to take up a company of players. My companions very prudently proposed going on board in the evening, lest we might oversleep ourselves, and miss the appointed fifth hour, but it happened that I did not hear of the plan till I was half undressed, and just on the point of stepping into a delightful, clean, comfortable bed. The surf was roaring without—the boat lay far out in the roadstead. I had not for a long time had a regular night's rest in a bed, and as I, for my part, felt quite sure of not oversleeping myself, the evil spirit of sloth and self-indulgence overcame me, and I determined to sleep ashore. The rest of the company, feeling their courage fail them, as they listened to the noise of the sea, and thought of the rocking vessel, were induced to do the same. The landlord also declared it was of no consequence—he would be sure to call us all in time. We slept quietly enough; but in the morning, when I awoke, just as the clock pointed to four, the landlord rushed into the room, exclaiming, "The damned Englishman is gone—is off! He went on board quite drunk last night, and got the steam up immediately!" We rushed down to the shore in a state of desperation, and would not believe our eyes: yet strain them as we might, we could perceive no Peter the Great. The sea was as smooth as a

mirror, and the black chimney was sought for in vain. On the shore lay packages of goods, as if they had been landed from a wreck, and passengers were running up and down the harbour, in the most violent state of excitement. Some were official persons, whose leaves of absence had expired; one was a lady in immediate expectation of her lying-in, which was to have taken place in Odessa, but would now, in all probability, happen in Little Tartary, in the midst of all sorts of inconveniences and privations. "How could this Englishman dare to play the public such a trick?" was the general question. "Ah, he does whatever comes into his head!" said the landlord. My two companions, whose business admitted of no delay, immediately procured horses, in order to ride over the mountains to Sevastopol, and, if they failed in catching the rogue of a captain, before he left that place, to continue their journey by land; but, as I felt extremely unwell, I chose what I thought the least of two evils, and made up my mind to remain fourteen days, till the return of the boat, thinking myself fortunate to escape the reproaches I merited, for having been, in some measure, the cause of the misfortune.

My hopes of employing the period of my compulsory stay in the Crimea in various excursions were frustrated by the attacks of an illness, which confined me to my bed for eight days. My only consolation was derived from some volumes of Goethe, from the friendly attentions of a German apothecary, who was so kind as to receive me into his house, and from the visits of an educated Russian, who used to come in the evening, and talk with me of the Caucasus and other distant countries, where he had held an appointment under government.

In due time I found myself once more on board the great Peter, and, to my surprise, recognized almost all my old acquaintance, who had been so loud in their protestations that they would never set foot in the steam-boat again. The weather was so beautifully fine, that few of the male passengers experienced any other inconvenience than an increase of appetite, and in four-and-twenty hours, a great part of which was spent very sociably in telling pleasant stories, and drinking to the prosperity of the Crimea, we entered the harbour of Odessa—the ties of friendship, so newly knit, were snapped asunder, and our agreeable party dispersed to all the points of the compass.

## THE STEPPES OF SOUTHERN RUSSIA.\*

### GENERAL ASPECT OF THE STEPPE.

THE steppes, as they are generally called, extend from the borders of Hungary to those of China. They constitute an almost uninterrupted plain, covered in spring and autumn by a luxuriant herbage; in winter by drifting snows, heaped up in some places, and leaving the ground bare in others; and in summer by clouds of dust so excessively fine, that even on the calmest day they hang suspended in the air, having the appearance rather of a vapour exhaled from the ground, than of earthy particles raised by the agitation of the atmosphere. The slight undulations that occur assume but rarely the character of hills, but artificial hillocks or tumuli are frequently met with, the origin of which it is impossible to trace through the darkness of by-gone ages. The most singular characteristic, however, of the steppe, is the total absence of trees, on a soil remarkable for its richness and the luxuriance of its herbage. For hundreds of miles, a traveller may proceed in a straight line without encountering even a bush, unless he happen to be acquainted with the few favoured spots known to the Tartar sportsmen, to whom they answer the purpose of game preserves. Countless herds of cattle roam over these noble pasture grounds, on which a calf born at the foot of the Great Chinese Wall, might eat his way along, till he arrived a well-fattened ox on the banks of the Dniester, prepared to figure with advantage at the Odessa market. The poor animals suffer much during the hot and dry summers, when every blade of grass is parched up; but the careful herdsman, who has provided himself with an abundant stock of hay, is able to keep his beasts alive till autumn returns to gladden them with fresh abundance.

Wherever a ridge of hills occurs, of sufficient height to afford protection against the northern blasts that come sweeping in an unbroken course from the shores of the Arctic Ocean, the character of the country is changed. In the Crimea, for instance, though the northern portion partakes of all the rude characteristics of the steppe, the south coast, sheltered by the central mountains, enjoys a climate equal to that of Italy, and allows the vine and the olive to be cultivated with as much success as in Provence.

\* The greater part of the second volume of Mr. Kohl's work on Southern Russia is occupied by what he calls a Characteristic Description of the Pontine Steppes. The following pages are not given as a close translation, but rather as an abstract of the author's lively and graphic account.



A country constituted by nature as are the Russian steppes, is evidently destined rather for a wandering and pastoral people, than for a settled and agricultural population; for in regions where but few prominent objects occur, there is but little to attach man to any particular spot. The Russian government, however, in a spirit of perversity not unusual in governments over which public opinion exercises but little influence, appears to have prescribed itself the task of converting the nomadic tribes into settled agriculturists, and the steppe itself into one vast cornfield. German and Bulgarian colonists have been tempted, by the offer of peculiar privileges, to establish themselves in different parts of the country, in the hope that their example might gradually wean the native tribes from their roving habits. Where the colonists have been located in the vicinity of large towns, the plan has been attended with partial success; but the foreigners soon discover the capabilities of the country, and in proportion as their means increase, rarely fail to invest their surplus capital in the purchase of flocks and herds, the numerical amount of which constitutes the customary standard by which wealth is estimated throughout the steppe.

We have described the steppes as one vast plain, but it must be borne in mind that this plain is of an elevated character, and terminates at the Black Sea in an abrupt terrace, rising above the water to the height of from 120 to 180 feet. The rivers which intersect this plain, and which in spring are swollen by the rapid thaw of the accumulated snows of winter, cut deep furrows in the surface; and as they frequently change their courses, they occasionally leave dry ravines that break in some measure the uniformity of the country. Little importance would be attached in other parts of the world to the trifling elevations and depressions thus formed; but in the steppe, the slightest variation of surface becomes a landmark of importance, and separate denominations are given by the inhabitants to every peculiarity of shape which the ground is made to assume under the action of water.

The rain-water flows but slowly away from the level surface of the steppe, and often, after a succession of rainy weather, remains for many days upon the ground, to the depth of several inches. A portion of this water, is absorbed by the soil, but the greater part finds its way slowly and imperceptibly into the rivers, carrying along with it a sufficient quantity of earth to impart a black and turbid look to all the streams that intersect the steppe. Many of the rivers, indeed all but the principal streams, are fed only by the rain and snow, and their beds, consequently, are dry in summer. Each of these ravines terminates in a waterfall, formed originally, no doubt, by the terrace that bounds the sea; but in proportion as the water wore away a channel for itself, the waterfall gradually receded, and, in the course of ages, made its way farther and farther into the interior of the country. In some instances this gradual retrogression of the waterfall, or termination of the river-bed, is sufficiently rapid to be noticed by the inhabitants, who frequently pretend to be able to determine the average number of feet which a ravine works its way backward year by year.

The elevation of the ground being so nearly alike throughout the whole of the steppe, the ravines formed by the action of the rain-water are of nearly equal depth in every part of the country. They are seldom less than a hundred feet deep, and seldom exceed a hundred and fifty. These ravines, or *vuipolotsh*, with their lateral branches on each side, as their edges are at all times exceedingly abrupt, offer to the traveller, as well as

to the herdsman driving his lowing and bleating charge across the plain, an impassable barrier, to avoid which it is often necessary to go round for many miles. The consequence is, that several roads or tracts are always sure to meet at the head of a *vuipolotsh*, which thus becomes a spot of some importance throughout the surrounding country. In winter, the ravine is usually filled by the drifting snow, and is then extremely dangerous to any one not well acquainted with the country. Men and cattle are at that season often buried in the snow-drifts, and their fate is ascertained only when the melting of the snow leaves their bodies exposed at the foot of the precipice.

The above description does not, of course, apply to the larger rivers that are supplied with water throughout the year. The banks of these are less abrupt, but their elevation, though more gradual, is about the same, being seldom less than a hundred, nor more than a hundred and fifty feet, over the level of the water. The beds of these large rivers are in general remarkably broad, and are almost always fringed with a belt of reeds, six or eight feet high, that forms an excellent cover for every description of water-fowl.

While the action of the rain is exercising so powerful an influence in the interior, the sea, as may easily be supposed, is not idle on the coast. A very remarkable characteristic of the Black Sea is, that at the mouth of every river a large lake is gradually formed by the action of the sea. If any of our readers will take up a map of the Black Sea, they will perceive a lake of some extent laid down at the mouth of almost every river, and some of these lakes, it will be seen, are marked as unconnected with the sea. These lakes are known along the coast by the name of *liman*. These limans are supposed to have been formed by the action of the sea driven into the mouth of the river by the violence of the prevailing storms, and constantly undermining the terrace of the overhanging steppe. During tranquil weather, an opposite action is going on. The rivers, as we have above said, are always turbid with the soil of the steppe, and their water, arrested in its course by the tideless sea, deposits its sediment in front of the liman, where a low strip of land is gradually formed. This natural mound, by which every liman is in course of time protected against the further encroachments of the sea, is called a *peressip*. Where the supply of water brought down by a river is tolerably large, the *peressip* is never complete, but is broken by an aperture called a *gheerl*, that forms a communication between the liman and the sea. Many limans, however, are fed by streams that bring down so feeble a volume of water, that the mere evaporation is sufficient to carry off the whole surplus, and the *peressip* in such cases becomes perfect, forming a barrier that completely cuts off all communication between the river and the sea. Limans so circumstanced exercise a baneful influence upon the country, in consequence of the offensive effluvia that arise from the stagnant water in summer.

Occasionally, in passing over the steppe, the traveller perceives a slight depression of the surface, as if a mighty giant had laid his hand upon the plain and pressed it down. In such natural basins, called *stavoks* by the natives, the rain collects, and though the soil soon absorbs the water, the place generally retains some moisture long after the rest of the country has been parched up by the summer heats. The *stavok*, it may easily be supposed, is, at such a time, an object of no trifling importance to the

herdsman, and is carefully guarded against the intrusion of strangers. A belief prevails upon the steppe, that the stavoks are holes formed by the ancient Mongolians, who dug out the earth to form their tumuli, but there is no good reason to suppose that the depression has originated otherwise than by a slight sinking of the subjacent strata.

## CLIMATE.

The climate of the steppes is one of extremes. In summer, the heat is as intense as the cold is severe in winter, the waters of the Black Sea exercising apparently but little influence in tempering the atmosphere. This is accounted for by the abrupt rise of the coast, which arrests the strata of air immediately above the surface of the water, and leaves a free course only to those portions of the air that fly at a higher level. The steppe therefore has, usually, an arctic winter and a tropical summer, and enjoys, only during spring and autumn, short intervals of that moderate temperature to which its geographical position, in the temperate zone, would appear to entitle it.

The core or substance of the long winter of the steppe is formed by the three months of December, January, and February, during which all the energies of nature appear sunk in an unbroken sleep; but though unbroken, it is by no means a quiet sleep that Dame Nature is allowed to enjoy during this period of the year, for the snow-storms are of frequent occurrence, and so excessively violent, that even the most seasoned veterans of the steppe stand in awe of them. The Russians distinguish these snow-storms into three separate classes. A storm during which the snow simply falls from the clouds is called a *myattyol*; a storm that raises the snow from the ground, and drives it in large masses before the wind, is called a *zamet*; but the storm which combines the characters of both the foregoing, and which goes by the name of a *viuga*, is the dreaded foe against whom all hasten to seek shelter. A *zamet* is not without its beauties when contemplated from the summit of a tumulus or from some other accidental elevation; the sun may then be seen shining brilliantly overhead, its rays reflected by myriads of icy crystals floating in the air below. For the traveller, however, who does not happen to look down upon it, but, on the contrary, is closely cultivating its acquaintance, the *zamet* has few charms, and is not unattended by danger. Every road or track is frequently altogether effaced, the ravines are filled up, and cases even occur where men and cattle are suddenly caught by a drift of snow, and completely buried under its accumulating mass. To the *viuga* no traveller attempts to expose himself; and even the government couriers are excused if, during the three days, the usual duration of one of these storms, they remain closely housed at the station which they happen to have reached.

The winter of the steppe, in intensity of cold, frequently surpasses the severest seasons known on the shores of the Baltic, and the cutting blasts from the north, sweeping huge masses of snow into the Black Sea, often cover it with a thick coating of ice for many leagues from the shore. In the winter between 1837 and 1838, the maximum height of the thermometer for four weeks was  $-10^{\circ}$  R., and several times it fell below  $-30^{\circ}$  ( $32^{\circ}$  below the zero of Fahrenheit), a temperature at which, in St. Petersburg, it is customary to close churches and theatres. The steppe, accord-



ingly participates in all the severity of a Russian winter, but enjoys few of the advantages which to the northern Russian go far to redeem the intensity of the cold. In northern Russia, and even in the Ukraine, the snow remains on the ground during the greater part of the winter, and the sledges quickly wear the surface of the road into a smooth mass of ice, over which the heaviest goods may be transported with a speed and facility surpassed only by a railroad. The Russian, therefore, usually prefers the winter months, not only for travelling, but also for the conveyance of heavy goods from one place to another. To the denizen of the steppe this natural railroad is unknown. The storms that prevail throughout the greater part of the winter keep the snow in a constant state of agitation, and prevent it from "caking" on the ground. The snow, in consequence, never covers the steppe, but seems to lie scattered over it in patches according as the wind may have drifted it about.

When the snow melts on the steppe, the spring may be said to commence. This usually takes place in April, but May is sometimes far advanced before the mass of water has had time to find its way into the rivers. During this *melting season*, the whole surface of the steppe is converted into a sea of mud, through which neither man nor beast can wade without positive danger. Through every ravine rushes a torrent of the dirtiest water that can well be imagined, and about the dwellings of men the accumulated filth of the winter is at once exposed to view, by the disappearance of the snowy mantle that, for a season, had charitably covered a multitude of sins. This operation is frequently interrupted by the return of frost, and the descent of fresh masses of snow, for there is no country, perhaps, where Winter makes a harder fight for it, before he allows himself to be beaten out of the field. For a few days, perhaps, a delightful south wind will diversify the plain with tulips, crocuses, and hyacinths; then all at once a rude north-easter will come scouring from the Ural mountains, making the flowers vanish in a trice, and enveloping the whole scene anew in one white shroud; another shift of the wind, and a gale from the north-west, will come sweeping along, discharging its heavy clouds, and washing the face of the steppe from the Ural to the Carpathians. When at last boisterous old Hyems has really been forced to beat his retreat, a most delightful period of the year succeeds, and the steppe, covered with a beautiful and luxuriant herbage, smiles like a lovely oasis between the parched desolation of the summer and the dreary waste of the winter. The whole earth now seems clad in the colour of Hope, while the sky assumes that of Truth; and though it is certainly monotonous enough to behold nothing but blue above and green below, yet the recollection of past hardships, and the consciousness of present abundance, make the season one of rejoicing to the native, and even excite for a while the admiration of the stranger. The latter, however, is certain, before long, to grow weary of a spring unadorned by a single flowering shrub, unvaried by a single bubbling brook. Not a hill to break the tedium of the landscape, through which a well-mounted rider may gallop for hundreds of leagues, and scarcely meet an object to make him conscious that he has quitted the spot whence he started! From Hungary he may urge his steed to the borders of Circassia without passing one grove of trees; from the Carpathians to the capital of Mongolia he will not once be gladdened by the sound of a streamlet murmuring over its pebbly bed. Grass, grass, grass—and nothing but

grass! Nor must this grass be supposed to resemble that which embellishes the velvet lawn of an English park. The herbage of the steppe is so coarse that an English labourer would have to look long before he found a place soft enough for an afternoon nap; and then, the tulips and hyacinths must not be judged by the beautiful specimens reared by a Dutch florist.

Thunder and lightning are frequent throughout May, but the thunder-storm on the steppe is, comparatively, but a poor kind of spectacle, there being neither trees nor rocks for the lightning to show his might upon, nor mountains, by their reverberating echoes, to give increased majesty to the pealing artillery of heaven; but these discharges of atmospheric electricity, though they want the grandeur of the Alpine tempest, are dear to the people of the steppe, where they are always accompanied either by showers or night dews, so that as long as it thunders there is no lack of fodder for the cattle. In June, the lightning ceases to play, and the periodical drought announces its approach, the whole month passing frequently away without depositing a particle of moisture on the ground. The consequences of this begin to manifest themselves in July, when the heated soil cracks in every direction, opening its parched lips in supplication for a few drops of water that are not vouchsafed. Heavy and tantalizing clouds, it is true, sweep over the steppe, but instead of showering their blessings on the thirsty land, hurry away to the Carpathian mountains or to the sea. The sun at this season rises and sets like a globe of fire, but the evaporations raised from the earth by the mid-day heat seldom fail to give a misty appearance to the sky towards noon. The heat, meanwhile, is rendered intolerable by its duration, for any thing like a cool interval never occurs, and shade is not to be thought of in a country where hills and trees are alike unknown. This season is one of great suffering to all living beings on the steppe. Every trace of vegetation is singed away, except in a few favoured spots; the surface of the ground becomes browner and browner, and at last completely black. Men and cattle assume a lean and haggard look, and the wild oxen and horses, so fierce and ungovernable in May, become as tame as lambs in July, and can scarcely crawl in August. Even the tanned skin of the poor *Khakhols* (as the Russians call the inhabitants of the steppe) hangs in wrinkled folds upon their hollow cheeks; their steps are feeble, and every thing about them assumes a melancholy and dejected look. Ponds dry up, wells cease to furnish water, and the beds of lakes are converted into sandy hollows. Water now rises in price, and becomes an article which it is worth a thief's while to steal. The few springs that continue to yield must have a guard set upon them night and day, or the legitimate owner will scarcely keep enough to slake his own thirst. At this season thousands of cattle perish on the steppe of thirst, while, as if to mock their sufferings, the horizon seems laden with humid clouds, and the parched soil assumes to the cheated eye in the distance the appearance of crystal lakes and running streams. Such is the faithful picture of a dry summer on the steppe, but, of course, the description does not apply every year. The years 1837 and 1838, for instance, were remarkable for their humidity; but in general, the summer is a period of wretchedness over the whole face of the steppe, and three or four thirst-and-hunger summers frequently succeed each other. The following description of the summer of 1833 was given me by an eyewitness:—

“The last rain fell early in May, and throughout the summer the whole

steppe presented an endless black plain, in which the eye sought in vain for a green spot. Scarcely a breath of wind ever stirred, and the nights were as sultry as the days. However exhausted the frame might be, it was scarcely possible to obtain any refreshing sleep. The moment either man or beast stirred, a thick black cloud was raised from the ground; nor could even a bird rise without filling the atmosphere with a column of what looked more like smoke than dust. Even the plants that were most carefully tended by the hand of man had a sickly look. The wheat, that usually rises to so luxuriant a height, scarcely peeped from its furrows, with its red blades and cornless ears. The hunger and thirst of the poor horses rose to a scarcely credible pitch, and the wretched animals were only kept alive by driving them into the corn-fields, to crop what had been intended as food for man. The few wells from which water could be obtained were guarded against intrusion by locks, and chains, and bars; but these were broken without hesitation, and even where sentinels had been set, they were driven away by the famishing multitude. All business was at a standstill, for no merchant would venture to send a caravan from the coast, when it was known that a draught of water could not be had by the traveller without fighting for it. Many of the *taboos*\* were broken up altogether, the animals refusing to submit to any control, and dispersing in different directions in search of water. Straggling horses were everywhere to be met with, rushing madly up the ravines, and sniffing the air in search of a few drops of moisture to cool their burning thirst."

In many respects the summer on the steppe is more cruel even than in the Sahara of Africa, or in the Llanos of Spanish America, for in neither of these does the moisture so completely disappear from the soil, and in the African desert, wherever there is water, a little terrestrial paradise of date trees and flowering shrubs is certain to be grouped around; but in the steppe, even the rivers flow only between grass, and reeds are the only shrubs by which the banks are fringed, while from the parched and gaping earth not even a cactus or an aloe peeps forth, into which a thirsty animal might bite to moisten its lips with the juice.

In August, the dryness of the atmosphere reaches the extreme point; but before the end of the month, the night dews set in, and thunderstorms are occasionally followed by rain. The leaden dusty sky becomes clear and blue again, and every thing reminds you that the delights of autumn are approaching. The temperature of September is mild and refreshing, and the detestable black dust of the steppe, kept down by frequent showers, no longer gives to every creature the complexion of a negro. A fresh green herbage quickly covers the whole plain, and man and beast in a short time recover their strength and spirits. Could Darius and his troops, when they invaded Scythia, but have endured the thirst of July, they might easily have kept their ground in September, and would have had abundant leisure to prepare their winter quarters.

Delightful the autumn of the steepe unquestionably is, but short and fleeting are its charms, for October is already a gusty Scythian month, marked by cold rains and fogs, and usually closing amid *zamets* and *viugas*; and as to November, that is set down as a winter month even by the most seasoned Russian, and the severest weather of an English

\* Herds of half-wild horses.



January might almost be deemed autumnal, compared to the cold that often prevails at Odessa in November.

## VEGETATION.

One of the first words that a stranger learns in the steppe is *burian*. The constant topic of the farmer's lamentations is *burian*; and the gardener, the herdsman, and the farmer, join with equal bitterness in heaping maledictions on the detested *burian*. The curiosity of every new arriver is, therefore, soon excited by an expression of such constant occurrence, and after some inquiry he finds that every plant or herb on which the cattle will feed is known by the general name of *trava*, and that every woody, wiry stem, from which they turn away, is ruthlessly classed in the condemned list of *burian*. Weeds of various kinds are, indeed, of frequent occurrence, owing to the salt and acrid nature of the soil; and many, which with us remain modestly concealed by the grass, shoot up into bushes on the steppe, driving the gardener and the husbandman to despair, and seldom rendering any other service either to man or beast than that of helping to boil the Russian's national dish of *borsht*. The thistle deserves the first place among the *burian* of the steppe. We have but little notion in England of the height to which the thistle will often grow in Southern Russia, where it not unfrequently assumes the form and size of a tree, overshadowing with its branches the low-sunken dwellings of the Troglodytes of the steppe. In places peculiarly favoured by the thistle, this description of *burian* will sometimes grow in such abundance, as to form a little grove, in which a Cossack on his horse may completely hide himself.

Another description of weed that stands in very bad odour in the steppe, has been aptly denominated wind-witch by the German colonists. This is a worthless plant that expends all its vigour in the formation of innumerable thread-like fibres, that shoot out in every direction, till the whole forms a light globular mass. The little sap to be obtained from this plant is bitterer than the bitterest wormwood, and even in the driest summer no animal will touch the wind-witch. It grows to the height of three feet, and in autumn the root decays, and the upper part of the plant becomes completely dry. The huge shuttlecock is then torn from the ground by the first high wind that rises, and is sent dancing, rolling, and hopping over the plain, with a rapidity which the best mounted rider would vainly attempt to emulate. Hundreds of them are sometimes detached from the ground at once on a windy day, and when seen scouring over the plain, may easily be mistaken at a distance for a taboon of wild horses. The Germans could not have christened the plant more aptly, and in bestowing on it the expressive name by which it is known among them, they no doubt thought of the national legends long associated with the far-famed witch-haunted recesses of the Blocksberg. The wild dances with which fancy has enlivened that ill-reputed mountain are yearly imitated by the wind-witches on the steppe. Sometimes they may be seen skipping along like a herd of deer; sometimes describing wide circles in the grass, sometimes rolling madly over one another, and sometimes rising by hundreds into the air, as though they were just starting to partake in the diabolical festivities of the Blocksberg itself. They adhere to each other sometimes like so many enormous burrs, and it is not an

uncommon sight to see some twelve or twenty rolled into one mass, and scouring over the plain like a huge giant in his seven-league boots. Thousands of them are yearly blown into the Black Sea; but with this *salto mortale* ends the witch's career, who loses in the water all the fantastic graces that distinguished her while ashore.

As next in importance among the *burian* of the steppe, the bitter wormwood must not be forgotten. It grows to the height of six feet, and sometimes, in a very dry summer, the cattle will not disdain to eat of it. All the milk and butter then become deestably bitter, and sometimes particles of the dry wormwood adhere to the wheat, in which case the bitter flavour of the plant is certain to be imparted to the bread.

Poisonous herbs are but little known in the European steppes, but in those of Asia there is a great abundance of venomous fungi, which spring up in autumn in such quantities, that at times the plain appears to be covered with them as far as the eye can reach. They are mostly white, and sometimes make the steppe appear in the morning as though there had been a heavy fall of snow during the night. The noon-day heat generally destroys them, but the following night often produces a fresh crop.

I might, of course, extend the list of the botanical peculiarities of the steppe much farther, but, upon the whole, the variety of plants that grow upon this vast grazing land of the Tartars is more limited than would be supposed. Botanists, I believe, reckon only five hundred species as native to the steppe, and each species usually grows in large masses. For leagues together the traveller will see nothing but wormwood; and, on leaving so bitter a specimen of vegetation, he will come to a tulip-bed, covering many thousands of acres; and at the end of that, to an equal extent of wild mignonette, to which cultivation has not, however, imparted the delicious perfume which recommends it to the horticulturist of more civilized lands. For days together, the *droshky* will then roll over the same description of coarse grass, ungainly to look upon, but on which the sheep thrive admirably, and which is said to give to Tartar mutton a delicious flavour that the travelled epicure vainly looks for in the gorgeous restaurants of Paris, or in that joint-stock association of comfort and luxury, a London club.

A singular phenomenon of the steppe manifests itself when man presumptuously attempts to invade it with his plough. The disturbed soil immediately shoots forth every variety of *burian*, against which the farmer must exert unceasing vigilance, or else farewell to the hope of a productive harvest. If the same land is afterwards left fallow, the *burian* takes possession of the field, and riots for a few years in undisturbed luxuriance. A struggle then goes on for some years longer between the weeds and the grass; but the latter, strange to say, in almost every instance, triumphs in the end, and a beautiful pasture-ground succeeds, which goes on improving from year to year, till it attains its highest degree of perfection. A reaction then ensues. A species of coarse grass, known by botanists under the name of *stipa pinnata*, takes possession of the ground, which it covers with its hard and woody stems, till the farmer, taking advantage of the first dry weather in spring, clears away the whole plantation by setting fire to it.

The burning of the steppe is the only kind of manuring to which it is ever subjected, and is generally executed in spring, in order that a fresh crop of grass may immediately rise, like a young phoenix, from the ashes.

This department of Tartar husbandry is usually managed with much caution, and the conflagration rarely extends beyond the limits intended to be assigned to it; but sometimes a fire rises by accident, or in consequence of a malicious act of incendiarism, and then the conflagration rages far and wide, sweeping along for hundreds of leagues, destroying cattle and corn-fields, and consuming not only single houses, but whole villages in its way. These fires are particularly dangerous in summer, owing to the inflammable condition, at that season, of almost every description of herbage. The flaming torrent advances with irresistible force, towering up among the lofty thistles, or advancing with a stealthy snakelike step through the parched grass. Not even the wind can always arrest its destructive course, for a fire of this kind will go streaming in the very teeth of the wind, now slowly and then rapidly, according to the nature of the fuel that supplies its forces. At times the invader finds himself compressed between ravines, and appears to have spent his strength, but a few burning particles blown across by a gust of wind enable him to make good his position on new ground, and he loses no time in availing himself of the opportunity. A well-beaten road, a ravine, or a piece of sunk ground in which some remnant of moisture has kept the grass green, are the points of which advantage must be taken if the enemy's advance is to be stopped. At such places, accordingly, the shepherds and herdsmen post themselves. Trenches are hastily dug, the flying particles are carefully extinguished as they fall, and sometimes the attempt to stop the course of such a conflagration is attended with success. Often however the attempt fails, and the despairing husbandmen see one wheat-field after another in a blaze, their dwellings reduced to ashes, and the affrighted cattle scouring away over the plain before the advancing volumes of smoke.

The course of one of these steppe-fires is often most capricious. It will leave a track of country uninjured, and travel for eight or ten days into the interior, and the farmer whose land has been left untouched will begin to flatter himself with the belief that his corn and his cattle are safe; but all at once the foe returns with renewed vigour, and the scattered farm-houses, with the ricks of hay and corn grouped in disorder around, fall a prey to the remorseless destroyer. The farmer, however, is not without his consolation on these occasions. The ashes of the herbage form an excellent manure for the ground, and the next crops invariably repay him a portion of his loss. Indeed, so beneficial is the effect, that many of the large proprietors subject their land regularly every four or five years to the process of burning; but the operation is then performed with much caution, wide trenches being first dug around the space within which it is intended that the fire should remain confined.

To the same process likewise are subjected the forests of reeds by which all the rivers of the steppe are fringed, but this is deemed so dangerous, that the law imposes banishment to Siberia as the penalty of the offence. Nevertheless, there are few places where the reeds are not regularly burnt away each returning spring, at which season, during the night, the Dnieper and Dniester appear to be converted into rivers of fire. There are two motives for setting light to the reeds, and these motives are powerful enough to completely neutralize the dread of Siberia: in the first place, the reeds serve as a cover to multitudes of wolves, which, when driven by the fire either into the water or into the open plain, are



easily destroyed by their remorseless enemies, the shepherds and herdsmen. The second motive is, the hope of obtaining a better supply of young reede by destroying the old ones. The reeds, it must be borne in mind, are of great value in the steppe, where, in the absence of timber and stones, they form the chief material for building.

#### THE ANIMAL KINGDOM.

The animal is not more varied than the vegetable kingdom; and both, to the naturalist, seem poor, though to the less scientific observer the steppe appears to be teeming with life. Uniformity, in fact, is more or less the distinguishing characteristic of the country, and the same want of variety that marks its outward features, prevails throughout every class of its animate and inanimate productions; but though few the species, the masses in which each presents itself are surprising. Eagles, vultures, hawks, and other birds, that are elsewhere rarely seen except singly, make their appearance on the steppe in large flights. The reed-grounds fairly teem with ducks, geese, and pelicans; the grass is alive with swarms of little earth-hares; larks, pigeons, thrushes, rooks, and plovers, are met with everywhere; and even butterflies, and other insects, appear in formidable masses. Among the latter, the locust, of which we shall have more to say by-and-by, plays a very important part. Few of these animals can be said to be peculiar to the steppe, but though found in other lands, they are not found there under similar circumstances, and the peculiar character of the country exercises a powerful influence in modifying the habits and instinct of animals.

The traveller has no sooner crossed the Dnieper, at Krementshug, than he sees a little animal gliding about everywhere through the grass, and even along the high road. This little animal is called by the Russians *sooslik*; by the German colonists, earth-hare; and by the learned, *cytillus vulgaris*. It is a graceful little creature, and quite peculiar to the steppe, never found in woody regions, and rarely even in the vicinity of a bush. It is particularly fond of the bulbous plants that abound in the steppe, and multiplies astonishingly. In manner and appearance it is something between a marmot and a squirrel, smaller than the former, and differing from the latter in the colour of the fur and the shortness of its tail. The soosliks burrow under the ground, and hoard up a stock of food for the winter. Their holes have always two entrances, and it is easy to drive them from their cover by pouring water in at one end, for to water they have so great an aversion, that they are always observed to decrease in numbers in wet seasons, and to multiply astonishingly in dry ones. The lively and frolicsome character of the sooslik is a constant source of amusement to a stranger. The little creatures are seen in every direction; sometimes gamboling together in the grass, at others sitting timidly at the doors of their houses, to watch the approach of an enemy. If a man or other strange object draws near, they rise upon their hind legs, like miniature kangaroos, and stretch their little heads up so high, that one might almost fancy they had the power of drawing themselves out like a telescope. Their little furs are used by the women as edgings for their dresses, and entire cloaks and dressing-gowns are often made of them, and sold at the Leipzig fair, where they are known by the name of *susselchen*. Of all the quadrupeds of the steppe, the sooslik is by far the most abundant; it

affords the chief article of food to the wild dogs, and is a constant object of chase to wolves, foxes, eagles, hawks, and other animals of prey.

The next in importance among the quadrupeds of the steppe is the mouse, which frequents the granaries in immense numbers; so much so, that the farmers will sometimes set fire to a whole rick of corn, for the mere purpose of destroying the mice. They multiply more particularly in moist seasons, and in this respect offer a contrast to the habits of the sooslik.

The wolf of the steppe is a smaller animal than the forest wolf, and distinguishes himself from the wolves of other countries by his subterranean propensities. Natural caverns become elsewhere the refuge of the wolf, but on the steppe he burrows like a rabbit, and it is there by no means an uncommon thing to find a nest of young wolves several fathoms deep in the ground. In the neighbourhood of Odessa, and the other large towns, these four-footed sheep-stealers are but seldom met with; but in no part of the world do they abound more than in the woodland districts by which the steppe is skirted, and from these haunts they sally forth in countless numbers, to prowl around the flocks and herds of the open country. Every farmhouse in the steppe is surrounded by fences twelve or fourteen feet high to protect them against the inroads of the wolves, yet these banditti of the plain are incessant in their attacks, and cases are by no means uncommon of their carrying off even infants from the cradle.

The dogs of the steppe are the most vulgar and worthless of all the curs in the world. They are long-haired, long-legged, long-headed, and long-tailed, and have evidently more wolfish than doggish blood in their veins. Their prevailing colour is a dirty grayish-brown, and, though little cared for by the Southern Russian, their number is incredible, and fully equal to what it can be in any part of the Ottoman empire. Yet the Southern Russian never tolerates a dog in his house, nor ever admits him to that familiarity which the race enjoys with us, and to which the cat and the cock are constantly courted by the tenants of the steppe. Still, whether as a protection against the wolf, or whether in consequence of that carelessness which allows the breed to multiply unchecked, every habitation on the steppe is certain to be surrounded by a herd of dogs, that receive neither food nor caresses from the hands of their owners, but must cater for themselves as well as they can. In spring, the season of abundance, when all the cattle and horses of the steppe run wild, the dog likewise wanders forth from the habitation of his master, and the puppies born at that period of the year are not a bit tamer than the wolves themselves, until the *viugas* of winter drive them back to the farmyards and villages. In summer, the dogs hunt the mice, rats, and soosliks, suck the eggs of birds, and learn even to catch a bird upon the wing, if it venture too near the ground; but in winter they are certain to congregate about the towns and villages, where swarms of shy, hungry, unowned dogs, are seen lurking about, in search of any kind of garbage that may be thrown away. Dozens of them may often then be seen gathered about the body of a dead animal, and gnawing eagerly away at its frozen sinews.

In the country, the dogs are a subject of complaint with every one, and with none more than with those who devote some care to the cultivation of their gardens. The dog of the steppe is passionately fond of fruit, and will not only devour the grapes in the vineyards, but will even climb into the trees in search of pears and plums. The better the dog is fed, the

more eager he will be after fruit, which is supposed to cool his blood, after too free an indulgence in animal food.

Like the wolves, the dogs of the steppe burrow in the ground, where they dig, not merely small holes, but roomy habitations, with narrow doors and spacious apartments, in which they find shelter against the heat of summer and the cold of winter.

The half-savage state in which the dogs live, leads them often to pair with the wolves, and a kind of cross-breed ensues. The people in the Ukraine, however, deny that the dog is ever permitted to acquire the rights of citizenship among the wolves; indeed, so jealous are the latter of the purity of their blood, that a she-wolf always destroys her brood if, on being taken to the water, they are found to lap up their liquor, instead of snapping at it in the approved wolfish fashion. In this way the wolves preserve their aristocratic blood from any mixture with that of the plebeian hounds, who are much less scrupulous. A straggling she-wolf will sometimes make up a match with a solitary cur, but after keeping house with him for a few months, she almost always grows ashamed of the connexion, runs away from her husband, and leaves him to provide for his young family the best way he can. The deserted father, on the return of winter, usually brings his hopeful progeny to his accustomed haunts, where the spurious race may always be known by their wolfish fur, their pointed ears, and the peculiar sharpness of their bite. They are much less apt to bite, indeed, than the genuine dog, but when they do bite, there's "no mistake" about the matter, and, in their partiality for mutton, they seldom fail to show themselves worthy of their maternal ancestors; for this reason, when allowed to live, they are usually chained up. They are useful in hunting wolves, whom they attack with greater animosity than any other dogs will do; and when old, they are usually destroyed, their skins being nearly of the same value as those of genuine wolves.

Among birds, none abounds more on the steppe than the bustard, or *drakhva*, as the Russians call it, which may be seen grazing in every direction. It migrates from Northern Russia on the approach of winter; but about Odessa, and about the mouths of the Dniester and Dnieper, it generally remains all the year round. Bustards are usually seen in parties of from twelve to twenty, but their gregarious habits increase in proportion as the winter advances, when from eighty to a hundred will often be found together. This, however, arises not so much from the sociable propensities of the bird, as from the more limited extent of pasture to which it is then obliged to confine itself. If, terrified by the approach of a real or supposed enemy, one of these large flocks rises, the birds do not remain together, but fly away in different directions to their several nests. In June or July, they may be observed feeding with their young, and on those occasions the male bird is usually seen anxiously watching over the security of his wife and little ones, whom he never fails to apprise of any danger that may seem to be drawing near. The vigilance of the cock is so great, that it is extremely difficult to get a shot at them. The Russians maintain that the bustard knows exactly how far a gun will carry, and never gives the alarm a moment sooner or later than is really necessary. Nevertheless, the Cossacks, who are the chief sportsmen on the steppe, contrive to outmatch the bustard in cunning. Sometimes they creep like snakes through the long grass, and come unobserved upon their prey; sometimes they lure the male birds by means of a little instrument made out of the wind-



pipe of an ox, on which the treacherous hunter contrives to imitate with astonishing accuracy the cry of the female. The most remarkable kind of bustard hunting, however, takes place in winter. The birds at that season creep under the thistles and other high weeds in search of some shelter against the severity of the cold. While in this position, if a hoar frost comes on, their wings become so incrustated with ice, that they lose the power of flying, and they then fall an easy prey to foxes, wolves, and above all, to man. The Cossacks, on horseback, run them down with ease, and kill them with the blow of a whip. If the hunter has chosen his time well, and is nimble in the chase, he may expect good sport. Indeed, there are men among the peasantry of the steppe who have become comparatively rich by a few successful bustard-hunts. One man, we are told, killed 150 bustards in one morning with his whip, and sold them at Odessa for 450 rubles. In the north, ten or fifteen rubles are often given for one of these birds.

Eagles, vultures, and other birds of prey, are sufficiently abundant, and have probably always been so; but of late years, since a portion of the steppe has been brought under the plough, a number of granivorous birds have made their appearance that were formerly altogether unknown there, and others that were formerly rare have multiplied in a striking manner. Of singing birds, the lark is the only one known on the steppe; but in the gardens about Odessa, the nightingale is occasionally heard.

Of reptiles there is no lack, frogs, toads, and snakes abounding in every part of the country, notwithstanding the dryness of the soil. Toads, particularly, display their ugly forms in every direction, and after a shower of rain they sometimes show themselves in such numbers, that it is difficult to walk a dozen paces without becoming the involuntary instrument of destruction to several of them. Sometimes a remarkable phenomenon occurs in the summer months; and though I never witnessed the fact myself, yet I have heard its appearance so often described, not merely by ignorant peasants, but by many of the most intelligent among the German colonists, that I feel it impossible to refuse credence to their accounts. This phenomenon is known among them as the "toad-shower."

They all agreed that, frequently in June or July, and sometimes even in August, after a short but heavy shower of rain, the ground would suddenly be covered with myriads of small toads, and no one could say whence they came, or whither, after a little while, they went. The rain, they said, must fall in thick heavy drops, and was generally accompanied by sunshine. Long-continued rain, they added, never bred toads, and for that reason, I suppose, the phenomenon never manifested itself during the moist summer of 1838, which I spent in the steppe. Of the numbers of these toads, they recount strange stories. Millions and millions are seen covering the ground, like an army of locusts. It is quite disgusting to walk among them, for in stepping on the ground, a man may crush forty or fifty of them at once. One man told me his stomach had fairly turned on beholding a Russian run barefooted through the unsightly mass, with the crushed bodies and the mangled limbs of the dying reptiles adhering to his feet. The wheels of a cart, I was told, would be saturated with the juices of the dead toads, and incrustated with their loathsome bodies. In size they are stated to be all extremely diminutive, about as large as the young toads that appear early in spring, but much more lively and active. Immediately after the shower, they are seen in the greatest numbers; but

they soon disappear, and on the following day not a trace is to be found of them, nor is it observed that, after one of these showers, the number of toads by which the rivers and ponds are peopled is ever materially increased. If you ask the people what they think to be the cause of these phenomena, the Russian will shrug his shoulders and say, *Bog snayet* (God knows); while a Greek will perhaps refer you to the devil for the required information. An intelligent, German, to whom I appealed, owned his inability to account for the thing. "It appears very marvellous," he said, "but I cannot for a moment believe that the creatures which we see after one of these toad-showers can be the young of our common toads; for, in the first place, we know that the young have their fixed season—namely, in spring—when they may be daily watched at their gambols, and may be seen to grow larger and larger as they grow older, but these shower-toads are seen sometimes as late as August; in the next place, it seems to me impossible that our common toads could produce all at once such enormous multitudes of young ones; and besides, how does it happen that all these shower-toads disappear almost as suddenly as they come? I believe they come and go with the rain, but I don't know how to account for it."

Lizards are also numerous, and sometimes not less than eighteen inches long. A Cossack looks upon them with great dread; but a Cossack stands in awe of every animal formed differently from his horse, his ox, or his dog.

Of all reptiles, however, the snake is the most abundant, though much less so in those parts of the country that are most thickly settled, particularly in those where the German colonists have been located, for the Southern Russian is generally too much afraid of a snake to kill it, even though it take up its abode under the same roof with him. "Let a snake alone," says the Russian, "and he will let you alone; but if you kill it, its whole race will persecute you." They believe in the existence of something of a corporation spirit among the snakes, and maintain that the relatives of a dead snake will never rest till they have avenged his death. In support of this belief, they appeal to the 28th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where it is said: "And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live." The expression "murderer," in this passage, they interpret to mean a murderer of snakes, and the "vengeance" to mean the vengeance of a snake on one that has dyed his hand in the blood of some other snake. The snake, they believe, is in the habit of dispensing poetical justice towards murderers in general, but more particularly towards those worst of murderers, the killers of snakes.

The largest snake of the steppe is the *coluber trabalis*, which, according to some, has been seen of the length of eighteen feet, but instances of five or six ells long are of frequent occurrence. Legends are not wanting among the Cossacks of gigantic serpents that, at no very remote period, infested the reed-grounds of the Dniester, whence they sallied forth to kill men and oxen, and now and then to amuse themselves by running down a rider and his steed, no horse being fleet enough to effect its escape, if one of these ogre snakes had once fairly started in chase of it; but these fabulous embellishments were hardly wanting, the plain truth being often

formidable enough. "We were bathing one day," said an old colonist to me once; "there were four of us, all strapping young lads, and we were just going to put on our clothes, when we discovered an enormous snake among some stones close to the spot where we stood. We were none of us timid fellows, but this was so formidable an antagonist to cope with, that we were at first inclined to leave him undisturbed. The fear, however, of being thought afraid, soon overcame every other apprehension, and we sent a few volleys of stones by way of opening the battle. The snake showed no signs of fear, but reared herself up three or four feet from the ground, hissing as loud as a goose, and determined, apparently, to bring us to closer action. Our stones were either badly aimed, or her glossy skin made them glide off without hurting her, and the sticks we had with us were much too small to be of any use; we therefore amused her by bombarding her with stones, each of us in turn stepping aside to provide himself with a club. Thus armed, we rushed in upon her in a body, and saluted her with a shower of blows. At first, she seemed disposed to show fight, but not liking the manner of our attack, she soon turned to seek safety in flight, and we pursued her with stones. At last, a large stone struck her on the head and stunned her for a moment, for she stopped and lay writhing in the sand. We were not long in profiting by our advantage: in another moment, the 'stroke of mercy' had been given. She was found to measure ten feet in length, and her body was about as thick as a quart bottle."

Another time, it was noticed for several weeks, by the colonists of two adjoining villages, that large tracks were continually made through their cornfields, as though a sack of flour had been dragged through them. They were at a loss to think who the trespasser could be, till one day a young foal was found half killed in the field, and from the appearance of the wounds it was immediately suspected that a large snake must be prowling about the villages. A few days afterwards these suspicions were confirmed, by the arrival of four or five carts, that came galloping into the village. It was hard to say whether the drivers or the horses were most frightened. They had been camping out during the whole night on the steppe, as is commonly done by agricultural labourers, the great distance of the cornfields from the farmer's house making it often impossible for his men to return home every day; indeed, during the busy season, they often remain on the steppe from Monday morning till Saturday night, and spend only the Sunday at home. Our frightened friends gave so formidable an account of the huge snake by which they and their horses had been scared, that the *Schulze* (the first magistrate of the village) thought it his duty to order a levy *en masse*, and invited the neighbouring colonies to join in the snake-hunt. About a hundred young men were got together, who sallied forth, armed with guns and clubs, and spent the whole day in beating every cover where the insidious game was likely to lie concealed. They found nothing, however, and were quizzed and laughed at on their return; but the *schulze* kept his party on the alert, and the next day the snake was again seen by some shepherds, who had fled with their flocks in dismay, but not before the huge reptile had killed one of their horses before their faces. The *schulze* and his *posse comitatus* took the field again, and this time they succeeded in getting sight of the enemy. Several shots were fired. The snake was wounded, and immediately took to flight, leaving a track of



blood to mark her course, which was pursued for some time till lost in the reed-grounds of the Dniester, where the creature probably died, for she was never heard of afterwards. Some of the more imaginative among the sportsmen insisted upon it that the snake was at least thirty feet long. The schulze, whose computation was the most moderate, and probably the nearest to truth, calculated the length of the animal to be at least three and a half fathoms.

In the vicinity of the German colonies, few snakes are now seen; but in the more remote parts of the steppe there are still districts in which they abound to such a degree, that no herdsman will venture to drive his cattle there.

#### LOCUSTS.

The snake, however, is an enemy of little moment when compared to a small insect that visits the steppe from time to time, and often marks its presence by the most fearful devastation. This insect is the locust. It is sometimes not heard of for several years in succession, and then again it shows itself, more or less, every season for four or five years together. When the German colonists first came into the country, about thirty years ago, the locusts had not been heard of for many years. There were two species of them known to exist, but they lived like other insects, multiplied with moderation, and were never spoken of as objects of dread. About 1820 it was first observed that the locusts had become decidedly more numerous. In 1824 and 1825 they began to be troublesome; but in 1828 and 1829 they came in such enormous clouds, that they hid the sun, destroyed the harvests, and in many places left not a trace of vegetation behind them. The poor colonists were in despair, and many of them thought the Day of Judgment must be at hand. They applied for advice as to what they ought to do, but their Russian and Tartar neighbours could suggest nothing, the oldest among them having no recollection of such scenes of devastation, though they remembered to have heard of similar calamities as having occurred in the days of their fathers. Under these circumstances, the Germans set their wits to work, and devised a system of operation, by means of which many a field was rescued from the devouring swarms. In 1830, 1831, and 1832, the locusts continued to honour Bessarabia and the rest of Southern Russia with their presence, but not in such appalling masses as during the two preceding years. In 1833 the damage done by them was comparatively trifling; and since 1834 they have ceased altogether to show themselves in swarms.

The colonists have established for themselves a kind of locust police. Whoever first sees a swarm approaching is bound to raise an immediate alarm, and to give the earliest possible information to the schulze, who immediately orders out the whole village, and every man, woman, and child, comes forth, armed with bells, tin kettles, guns, pistols, drums, whips, and whatever other noisy instruments they can lay their hands on. A frightful din is then raised, which often has the effect of scaring away the swarm, and inducing it to favour some quieter neighbourhood with its presence. When the Empress of Russia visited Odessa in 1828, she had an opportunity of seeing a swarm of locusts scared away from M. Reynaud's garden, by a party armed only with drums.

If the locusts have an aversion to noise, they are still greater enemies to smoking? against which Royal James himself did not entertain a more

pious horror. The colonists, accordingly, on the first appearance of a fresh swarm, get together as much straw, vine-branches, and dry dung as they can, and with these, fires are lighted about the fields and grounds which it is thought most desirable to protect. This expedient, however, is often a complete failure, for when one of these countless swarms has dropped upon the ground, and proceeds grazing along in the direction of the fire, the mere weight of the general mass forces the foremost ranks into the flames, where a few thousands of them perish, perhaps, but their bodies extinguish the fire, and leave a free field for the advancing enemy.

Sometimes the colonists succeed by means of smoke in scaring a swarm, and making it take to the air again, and then great skill is shown in making it fly away from the fields which it is wished to preserve. If a liman or the sea be near at hand, it is thought a great point to drive the locusts into the water, into which they fall in such enormous masses, that their bodies form at last little floating islands; upon these their more fortunate companion establish themselves, to the height of twenty or thirty inches. If a strong wind blow from the shore, these pyramids of locusts are of course driven out to sea, and nothing more is heard of them; but if the wind be not strong, they work their way back to the shore, where they soon dry their wings and prepare themselves for fresh depredations. The millions, meanwhile, that have found a watery grave, give a blackened hue to the foam of the breakers, and lie scattered along the coast in long lines, that look like huge masses of seaweed thrown up by the waves. The cunning of the locusts on these occasions is surprising. A swarm that, with the aid of a strong wind, has been driven out to sea, will often return to shore, not attempting to fly in the wind's teeth, but beating to windward, with a succession of tacks, in regular seamanlike style.

The locusts appear to be perfectly aware that, in the village gardens, they are certain to find many things that suit their palates amazingly; and, accordingly, they seldom fail to step a little out of their way when they see a village to the right or left of their line of march. The terror of a village attacked by one of these swarms may be more easily imagined than described. Fancy a heavy fall of snow, each flake a little black voracious insect, and these, as they fall, covering the ground to the depth of two or three inches, while the air still continues obscured by the myriads that remain fluttering about! The roofs of the houses, and every inch of ground about them, are covered by a thick mass of crawling vermin, crackling, hissing, and buzzing! Every aperture of the house may be carefully closed, yet they come down the chimney by thousands, and beat against the windows like hail! During the locust years, many of these swarms settled upon Odessa, covering the streets and public places, dropping by hundreds into the kettles and saucepans in the kitchens, invading at once the ball-room and the granary, strutting along in the public walks by millions, and displaying their ugly antics alike in the hovel of the beggar and the fine lady's boudoir.

The locusts of southern Russia are divided into two species; the *Russaki*, or Russians (*gryllus migratorius*), which are about an inch and a half, and the *Saranni* (*gryllus vastator*), which are about two inches long. Both are equally voracious and equally dreaded, and both are equally produced from eggs deposited in the earth in August and September, by means of a piercing tube or oviduct with which the female is provided. The animal does not, however, bore merely with its piercer, but thrusts its whole

body into the ground, in order that the eggs may be deposited as deeply as possible. This depends, of course, partly upon the nature of the soil, which, when hard, often baffles the exertions of the insect, and compels it to leave its eggs to take their chance just below the surface. It has, however, been observed, that the locust, for the most part, looks out for a soft place, where she bores away industriously, till completely lost to sight, turning her whole body round all the time. When the hole has been bored as wide and to as great a depth as the animal's strength will allow, she deposits in it from fifty to seventy eggs. This operation generally occupies two or three entire days; at the end of which, the mother of a future race of conquerors, exhausted by her labours, lies down and dies. If she has been able to make the hole large enough, she remains in it, covering her eggs with her decaying body. These eggs are white, and nearly of the same shape and size as those of ants, neatly arranged into a mass or nest by some white glutinous substance, and when taken out of the ground, they continue to adhere together. By placing the eggs in a glass, and subjecting them to a gentle degree of heat, they may very soon be hatched, when the baby-locusts will be seen creeping into a premature existence. In the nest under-ground matters go on more slowly. There the eggs continue throughout the autumn and winter, and it is not till the end of April or the beginning of May that the young locusts begin to creep out of their holes. If covered with a thin layer of snow, the eggs are seldom killed by the winter frost, even when covered only by an inch of earth; but if the ground be ploughed up, and the eggs exposed, they are destroyed by the cold.

The first warm days of spring call the young locusts forth, and in a very short time they appear in incredible numbers. The millions of mothers that in autumn sunk under the load of their eggs, now start up sixty-fold into renewed life. They have no wings when first born, but their legs immediately acquire vigour, so that they are at once provided with the powers of locomotion. They immediately begin to eat, and a rich grassy plain, if they are undisturbed, will perhaps be eaten bare in a few days; if disturbed, they commence their peregrinations forthwith, and the army seems to increase in number as it marches along. They go on rustling and crackling, and crawling over one another in heaps. They almost always proceed in a straight line, scarcely any object sufficing to impede their course. They climb over the roofs of the low houses, over fences and walls, march through the streets of towns and villages, not avoiding either man or beast, so that the wheels of a cart will at times sink several inches deep into a mass of locusts, while a pedestrian walking-through them will often have them up above his ankle. Enormous quantities of them fall down into the ravines, and are carried away by the streams, which are sometimes so thickly covered with the black carcasses that the water is completely lost to sight. The march of these young locusts is more dreaded even than the flight of the old ones; not having yet got their wings, they are not to be frightened away either by guns or drums; and to attempt to destroy them were hopeless, on account of their numbers, a few hundred thousand, more or less, making but little difference. They are most greedy too when young, and as the grass and corn are just then most tender, the devastation is the more difficult to repair. It is true that, while in this state, their ravages are confined within narrower limits, on account of the slow rate at which they advance, an



army of young locusts being seldom able to march more than two versts in a day.

In three or four weeks they attain their full size. In the fifth week their wings are formed, and they begin to fly. From this time on, they cruise about the country in huge swarms, till about the middle of September, when, after an existence of four months, they all perish, but not before due provision has been made for their multiplication in the ensuing year. The largest swarms appear in the steppe about the middle of August, when they are supposed to be joined by considerable reinforcements from the south. Their flight is clumsy, and always accompanied by a rustling noise, which, when a swarm of them flies along, is as loud as that made by a strong wind blowing through a grove of trees. They cannot fly against the wind, but, as has already been observed, they know how to work their way to windward, in true nautical fashion. The height to which they rise depends much upon the state of the weather. On a fine day, they will raise themselves nearly two hundred feet above the ground—that is to say, the cloud will be seen at that height, but the upper strata of these little destructives must of course be much higher. In gloomy weather they fly so near the ground, that a man walking through a swarm will often be unable to endure the blows inflicted by them as they fly up against his face, but will be obliged to crouch together and turn his back to the current till it has passed away. When flying at a great height, if they discover a fresh piece of pasture-ground, they sink slowly down till they are about six or seven feet from the surface, when they drop like a shower of stones. As soon as it rains they always drop to the ground. They are rakish in their hours, for they often fly about merrily till near midnight, and seldom leave their roosting-places till eight or nine in the morning. A cloud of locusts is mostly of an oval form, a quarter of a verst broad, and from two to three versts long. Sometimes a cloud will be seen to separate into two or three parties, that afterwards unite again. What the thickness of such a cloud may be it is difficult to say, but it must be considerable for not a ray of sunshine can pierce the mass, and the shadow cast on the ground is so dense, that, on a hot summer's day, it diffuses an agreeable coolness around. The sudden darkness occasioned by the appearance of a swarm of locusts on a fine day, is quite as great as that which would be caused by a succession of black rainy clouds. In calm weather a cloud of locusts will fly about fourteen English miles in eight hours.

The ground honoured by the visit of one of these swarms, always assumes the appearance of a field of battle. In their eagerness to feed, they often bite each other; and when falling down, many break their wings, and are unable to rise again with the rest of the swarm. It is difficult to estimate the numbers of one of these winged armies. The people of the country maintain that, when a large cloud of locusts falls, it will cover a piece of ground of nearly four versts long and one verst broad, and in many places the creatures will lie three and four deep, and scarcely an inch will remain uncovered. If there happen to be a tree near the place, it will seem ready to break under the sudden load. Now, allowing for each insect a surface of two inches by one, and making no account of the patches where they lie three or four deep, it would follow that a small swarm, covering only one square verst, must consist of not much less than

a thousand millions of locusts!\* And every one of them, as the Russians say, has the bite of a horse, the greediness of a wolf, and a power and rapidity of digestion unequalled by any other animal on the face of the globe!

Though there are some descriptions of food for which the locust shows a partiality, the creature is seldom difficult in its choice, but eats up every green plant that comes in its way. The leaves and young branches vanish from the trees in a trice; a rich meadow is presently converted into a tract of black earth; the bank of a river is stripped with magical rapidity of its reedy fringe; and not a particle of stubble is left to mark the place where the green corn was waving but an hour before. As they eat they keep moving on, but as the first comers seldom leave much for their successors, the rear-guard frequently rise into the air, and let themselves down again somewhat in advance of the main body. Others are continually flying away towards the flanks, and in proportion as the marauders advance, their solid phalanx assumes more and more the appearance of a lengthened line. The sound of the little animal's bite as it grazes, joined to the continual rustling of its wings, which it always keeps in motion while feeding, may be distinctly heard at a considerable distance. To any one near the spot, the noise is quite as great as that made by a large flock of sheep eagerly cropping the grass. If the corn is quite ripe, the locust can do it little harm; but whatever is still green is certain to be devoured. Sometimes a farmer, on seeing the enemy's approach, will try to save a field of nearly ripe corn by cutting it down and carrying the sheaves home immediately, but the attempt rarely succeeds, for the invading host advances its line of march, undismayed by the mowers, and will eat away the blades faster than the scythe can cut them. There are few things the locusts are fonder of than Indian corn, and it is a curious sight to behold a field of maize vanishing before their ravenous teeth. The maize grows to a great height on the steppe, and makes a very imposing appearance as it approaches maturity. A small number of locusts, however, are able, in a few seconds, to perforate the plant like a honeycomb, and in a few minutes not a trace of it is left. Each plant is quickly covered with insects, while others are industriously working away at the root. Blade falls rapidly on blade, and at each fall a little swarm rises, to settle quickly down again with renewed voracity. If the corn was nearly ripe, the farmer has, perhaps, the consolation of seeing a yellow stubble-field remaining, to tantalize him with the recollection of the hoped-for abundance. In the costly gardens of the Odessa merchants, the locust is particularly destructive. It does not touch the melons, cucumbers, nor the growing fruit on the trees, but it ruthlessly devours the leaves and the stalks, leaving the fruit scattered on the ground, to wither with the bodies of the slain destroyers. The leaves, tendrils, and young branches of a vine, will be completely eaten away, but the grapes will be found scattered like so many berries below. Every tree in the garden, meanwhile, is bending under the unwelcome load, while the crackling of the branches, the tearing of the bark, and the rustling of the wings, raise a din quite as loud as that of a carpenter's workshop, in which a score or two of men are sawing, boring, and

A verst is 3500 feet long, a square verst contains, therefore, 12,250,000 square feet, and 1,764,000,000 square inches.

planing; and when at length the swarm takes its departure, it leaves behind it a scene of such perfect desolation, as no other animal in the world can equal. Even the dung, of which it leaves an enormous quantity behind, is injurious to the soil on which it falls; and for a long time after a field has been visited by a swarm of locusts, the cattle manifest the greatest aversion to the place.

## HERDS OF HORSES.

"Here we are in the land of the *Tshabawns*,"\* is a common expression with Russian travellers on entering the steppe, where the first objects that usually present themselves to the stranger, are some of the numerous flocks of sheep belonging to the wealthy nobles of Russia, some of whom count their woolly treasures by hundreds of thousands. To their owners, these flocks possess an interest beyond any that the steppe can offer; but to a stranger, the wild and exciting life of the *tabuntshiks* is certain to offer more attraction. We are accustomed to speak of the *wild* horses of the steppe, but the expression must be received with some allowance; for, in the proper sense of the word, wild horses have long ceased to inhabit any part of the steppe subject to Russia, nor have we any authentic record of the time when this noble animal ranged free and uncontrolled over the plains bordering on the Euxine. At present, every *taboon*, or herd, has its owner, to whom the *tabuntshik* has to account for every steed that is lost or stolen; and it is not till we reach the heart of Tartary, or the wastes that stretch along the sea of Aral, that we meet, for the first time, the horse really in a state of nature. The *taboons* of the steppe, however, present the animal in a condition sufficiently bordering on freedom to allow of our studying his natural habits and disposition with more correctness than it would be possible for us to do in the more artificial condition in which alone we are in the habit of seeing him in Europe. Although, therefore, in a statistical point of view, the sheep constitutes a more important part of the pastoral population of the steppe, ten flocks of sheep, at least, occurring for one herd of oxen or horses, yet we shall venture, in our remarks on the nomadic life of this part of the great Russian empire, to assign the prominent place to the *taboons* or breeding studs, which serve to mount nearly the whole of the imperial cavalry, and from which, in a moment of emergency, the government might derive, for the equipment of an invading army, resources the extent of which are but little dreamt of in the more civilized regions of Europe.

Many of the Russian nobles possess enormous tracts of land in the steppe. Among the largest proprietors may be named the families of Potocki, Orloff, Rasumoffsky, Skarshinsky, Woronzoff, &c. The scanty population makes it impossible, even if other obstacles did not exist, to bring any very considerable portion of their estates under the plough; and most of the wealthy landowners have, consequently, found it to their interest to devote their chief attention to the breeding of sheep, cattle, and horses. Even at a very remote period, it appears to have been the practice of the lords of the steppe to follow a similar course. The horses, more light of foot than either sheep or oxen, may easily be made to range over

\* *Tshabawn* is the South Russian word for a shepherd. *Tabuntshik* is the name given to the man charged with the care of a herd of horses.



a larger expanse of ground, and thus obtain support from land too poor to afford pasturage to any other description of cattle.

A small number of stallions, and mares, placed under the care of a herdsman, are sent into the steppe as the nucleus of a taboon. The foals are kept, and the herd is allowed to go on increasing until the number of horses is thought to be about as large as the estate can conveniently maintain. It is a very rare thing, however, for a taboon to contain more than a thousand horses, but there are landowners in the steppe who are supposed to possess eight or ten such taboons in different parts of the country. It is only when the taboon is said to be full, that the owner begins to derive a revenue from it, partly by using the young horses on the estate itself, and partly by selling them at the fairs, or to the travelling horse-dealers in the employ of the government contractors.

The tabuntshik, to whose care the taboon is intrusted, must be a man of indefatigable activity, and of an iron constitution, proof alike against the severest cold and the most burning heat, and capable of living in a constant exposure to every kind of weather, without the shelter even of a bush. It must be a matter of indifference to him whether he make his bed at night among the wet grass, or upon the naked earth baked for twelve hours by an almost vertical sun. In the coldest weather he can seldom hope for the shelter of a roof; and though the hot wind blow upon him like the blast of a furnace, and his skin crack with very dryness, yet he must pass the greater part of his day in the saddle, ready at every moment to gallop off in pursuit of a stray steed, or to fly to the rescue of a young foal attacked by a ravenous wolf. The shepherd and the herdsman carry their houses with them. Their large waggons, that always accompany them on their wanderings, afford shelter from the weather, and a warm nest at night; but these are luxuries the tabuntshik must not even dream of. His charges are much too lively to be left to their own guidance. His thousand horses are not kept together in as orderly and disciplined a fashion as those of a regiment of dragoons, and it may be doubted whether an adjutant of cavalry has to ride about as much, and to give as many orders, on a day of battle, as a tabuntshik on the quietest day that he spends in the steppe. When on duty, a tabuntshik scarcely ever quits the back of his steed. He eats there, and he even sleeps there; but he must beware of sleeping at the hours when other men sleep, for, while grazing at night, the horses are most apt to wander away from the herd, and at no time is it more necessary for him to be on his guard against wolves, and against those adventurous dealers in horse-flesh, who usually contrive that the money which they receive at a fair shall consist exclusively of profit. During a snow-storm, the poor tabuntshik must not think of turning his back to the tempest; this his horses are but too apt to do, and it is his business to see that they do not take fright, and run scouring before the wind.

The dress of a tabuntshik is chiefly composed of leather, fastened together by a leathern girdle, to which the whole veterinary apparatus, and a variety of little fanciful ornaments, are usually appended. His head is protected by a high cylindrical Tartar cap, of black lambskin, and over the whole he throws his *sreeta*, a large, brown, woollen cloak, with a hood to cover his head. This hood, in fine weather, hangs behind, and often serves its master at once for pocket and larder.

The tabuntshik has a variety of other trappings, of which he never

divests himself. Among these, his *harabnik* holds not the least important place. This is a whip, with a short thick stem, but with a thong often fifteen or eighteen feet in length. It is to him a sceptre that rarely quits his hand, and without which it would be difficult for him to retain his riotous subjects in any thing like proper order. Next comes his sling, which he uses like the South American lasso, and with which he rarely misses the neck of the horse whose course he is desirous of arresting. The wolf-club is another indispensable part of his equipment. This club, which mostly hangs at the saddle, ready for immediate use, is three or four feet long, with a thick iron knob at the end. The tabuntshiks acquire such astonishing dexterity in the use of this formidable weapon, that, at full gallop, they will hurl it at a wolf, and rarely fail to strike the iron end into the prowling bandit's head. The club skilfully wielded carries almost as certain death with it as the rifle of an American backwoodsman. A cask of water must also accompany the tabuntshik on every ride, for he can never know whether he may not be for days without coming to a well. A bag of bread and a bottle of brandy are likewise his constant companions, besides a multitude of other little conveniences and necessities, which are fastened either to himself or his horse. Thus accoutred, the tabuntshik sallies forth on a mission that keeps his dexterity and his powers of endurance in constant exercise. His thousand untamed steeds have to be kept in order with no other weapon than his *harabnik*, and this, it may easily be supposed, is no easy task. His greatest trouble is with the stallions, who, after spending their ten or twelve years on the steppe, without having once smelt the air of a stable, or felt the curb of a rein, become so ungovernable that the tabuntshik will sometimes threaten to throw up his office, unless such or such a stallion be expelled from the tabooon.

Such constant exposures to fatigue and hardship make the average life of a tabuntshik extremely short. At the end of ten or fifteen years he is generally worn out, and unfit for such arduous duty. His pay, therefore, is proportionably high; for every tabuntshik is a hired servant, as no serf could be impelled, by any dread of punishment, to exert that constant vigilance without which the whole tabooon would be broken up in a few days. What the fear of the whip, however, cannot effect in a slave, the hope of gain may ensure from a freeman. The wages of a tabuntshik are regulated by the number of horses committed to his care. For each horse he usually receives five or six rubles a year, so that the guardian of a full tabooon may earn his six thousand rubles annually (275*l.*) if he can keep the wolf and the thief at bay; but every horse that is lost the tabuntshik must pay for, and horse-stealing is carried on so largely and dexterously on the steppe, that he may sometimes lose half a year's wages in a single night. He must also pay his assistants out of his own wages, and three assistants at least will be required to look after a tabooon of a thousand horses. Notwithstanding all these drawbacks, however, the tabuntshik, if he were vigilant and careful, might always save money; but few of them do so, and it rarely happens that, when invalidated, they have hoarded together a little capital to enable them to embark in any more quiet occupation.

The hardships to which they are constantly exposed, and the high wages which they receive, make the tabuntshiks the wildest dare-devils that can be imagined; so much so, that it is considered a settled point, that a man who has had the care of horses for two or three years, is unfit for any quiet or settled kind of life. No one, of course, that can gain a tolerable

livelihood in any other way will embrace a calling that subjects him to so severe a life; and the consequence is, that it is generally from among the scamps of a village that recruits are raised for this service. They are seldom without money, and when they do visit the brandy-shop, they are not deterred from abandoning themselves to a carouse by the financial considerations likely to restrain most men in the same rank of life. They ought, it is true, never to quit the taboo for a moment, but they will often spend whole nights in the little brandy-houses of the steppe, drinking and gambling, and drowning in their fiery potations all recollections of the last day's endurance. When their senses return with the returning day, they gallop after their herds, and display no little ingenuity in repairing the mischief that may have accrued from the carelessness of the preceding night.

The tabuntshik lives in constant dread of the horse-stealer, and yet there is hardly a tabuntshik on the steppe that will not steal a horse if the occasion present itself. The traveller who has left his horses to graze during the night, or the villager who has allowed his cattle to wander away from his house, will do well to ascertain that there be no taboo in the vicinity, or in the morning he will look for them in vain. The tabuntshik, meanwhile, takes care to rid himself, as soon as possible, of his stolen goods, by exchanging them away to the first brother herdsman that he meets, who again barter them away to another, so that in a few days a horse that was stolen on the banks of the Dnieper, passes from hand to hand till it reach the Bug or the Danube, and the rightful owner may still be inquiring after a steed, which has already quitted the empire of the czar, to enter the service of a Moslem, or to figure in the stud of a Hungarian magnate. The tabuntshiks have constantly little affairs of this kind to transact with one another, for which the Mongolian tumuli scattered over the steppe afford convenient places of rendezvous.

Accustomed to a life of roguery and hardship, and indulging constantly in every kind of excess, the tabuntshik comes naturally to be looked upon by the more orderly classes as rather a suspicious character; but his friendship is generally worth having, and his ill-will is always dreaded. His very master stands a little in awe of him, for a tabuntshik is not a servant that can be dismissed at a day's notice. When the taboo has once become accustomed to him, the animals are not easily brought to submit to the control of a stranger. The tabuntshik, moreover, has learned to know his horses; can tell the worth of each, can advise which to sell and which to keep, and knows where the best pasture-ground may be looked for. Such a fellow, therefore, if intelligent and experienced, whatever his moral character may be, becomes necessary to his master, and, feeling this, is not long without presuming upon his conscious importance. He plays his wild pranks with impunity, and looks down with sovereign contempt upon the more decent members of society, particularly upon the more honest *tshabawns* and *tsheredniks*,\* whom he considers in every point of view as an inferior race.

At the horse-fairs, the tabuntshik is always a man of great importance, and it is amusing and interesting to see him with his wild taboo at Balta and Berditseff, where are held the greatest fairs between the Dnieper and the Dniester. The horses are driven into the market in the same free con-

\* Shepherds and cowherds.



dition in which they range over the steppe, for if tied together they would become entirely ungovernable. When driven through towns and villages, the creatures are often frightened; but that occasions no trouble to their drivers, for the herd is never more certain to keep together than when made timid by the appearance of a strange place. In the market-place, the tabooon is driven into an enclosure, near which the owner seats himself, wh the tabuntshik enters along with his horses. The buyers walk round to make their selection. They must not expect the horses to be trotted out for their inspection, as at Tattersall's, but must judge for themselves as well as they can, with the comfortable reflection that, after they have bought the animals, they will have ample time to become acquainted with them. "I have none but wild horses to sell," the owner will say. "Look at them as long as you please. That horse I will warrant five years' old, having bred him on my own steppe. Further than that I know nothing about him. The price is a hundred rubles. Will you take him? If you say yes, I'll order him to be caught; but I'd advise you to make the tabuntshik a present, that he may take care not to injure the animal in catching it." This last caution is by no means to be neglected, for a horse carelessly caught may be lamed for several weeks, and as the horse is never caught till the bargain has been concluded, any injury done to the animal is the buyer's business, and not the seller's. If, on the other hand, the tabuntshik be satisfied with the fee given him, he goes about his task in a much more methodical manner. The sling is thrown gently over the neck of the designated steed, but the latter is not thrown with a jerk to the ground. He is allowed for a little while to prance about at the full length of his tether, till his first fright be over. Gradually the wild animal becomes reconciled to the unwonted restraint, and the buyer leads him away quietly to his stable, where it will often take a year's tuition to cure him of the vicious habits acquired on the steppe.\*

After saying so much of the tabuntshik, it will be but fair to give some account of the life led by the riotous animals committed to his charge. During what is called the fine season, from Easter to October, the tabooon remains grazing day and night in the steppe. During the other six months of the year, the horses remain under shelter at night, and are driven out only in the day, when they must scrape away the snow for themselves to get at the scanty grass underneath. When we say the horses remain under shelter, it must not be supposed that the shelter in question resembles in any way an English stable. The shelter alluded to consists of a space of ground enclosed by an earthen mound, with now and then something like a roof towards the north, to keep off the cold wind. There the poor creatures must defend themselves as well as they can against the merciless Boreas, who comes to them unchecked in his course all the way from the Pole. To a stranger, it is quite harrowing to see the noble animals, in severe weather, in one of these unprotected enclosures. The stallions and the stronger beasts take possession of the shed; the timid and feeble stand

\* The business done at these fairs is trifling compared to that transacted on the steppe itself. The contractors who supply the Russian cavalry, and other dealers on a large scale, travel about from one tabooon to another, select their horses, and buy them at so much a head, for it is generally taken for granted, that the horses of the same tabooon are pretty nearly all of the same value, all wild and vicious, and troublesome to tame. Some tabooons, however, enjoy a higher reputation than others, and will command a better price.

in groups about the wall, and creep closely together, in order mutually to impart a little warmth to each other. Nor is it from cold that they have most to suffer on these occasions. Early in winter they still find a little autumnal grass under the snow, and the tabuntshik scatters a little hay about the stable to help them to amuse the tedious hours of night. The customary improvidence of a Russian establishment, however, seldom allows a sufficient stock of hay to be laid in for the winter. As the season advances, hay grows scarce, and must be reserved for the more valuable eoach and saddle horses, and the tabuntshik is obliged to content himself with a portion of the dry reeds and straw stored up for fuel.\* For these he has soon to battle it with the cook and the stove-heaters,† whose interest never fails to outweigh that of the poor taboo horses. These, if the winter last beyond the average term, are often reduced to the thatch of the roofs, and sometimes even eat away one another's tails and manes; and that in a country where every year more grass is burnt during the summer than would suffice to provide a profusion of hay for a century of winters! It will hardly be matter of surprise to any one to learn that the winter is a season of sickness and death to the horses of the steppe. After the mildest winter, the poor creatures come forth a troop of sickly-looking skeletons; but when the season has been severe, or unusually long, more than half of them, perhaps, have sunk under their sufferings, or have been so reduced in strength, that the ensuing six months are hardly sufficient to restore them to their wonted spirits. The year 1833 was remarkably destructive to the taboons, and they had not recovered from its effects five years afterwards, when I last visited the steppe. In such years of famine, the most enormous prices are sometimes paid for hay; yet every careful agriculturist may secure his cattle against such sufferings by a little industry and forethought. In the proper season he may have as much hay as he pleases, for the mere trouble of cutting it: and such is the dryness of the climate during summer, that the hay may always be carried home and stacked within a few hours after it has been mown.

From the hardships of an ordinary winter, the horses quickly recover amid the abundance of spring. A profusion of young grass covers the ground as soon as the snow has melted away. The crippled spectres that stalked about a few weeks before, with wasted limbs and drooping heads, are as wild and mischievous at the end of the first month as though they had never experienced the inconvenience of a six months' fast. The stallions have already begun to form their separate factions in the taboo, and the neighing, bounding, prancing, galloping, and fighting goes on merrily from the banks of the Danube to the very heart of Mongolia.

In a taboo of a thousand horses, there are generally fifteen or twenty stallions, and four or five hundred brood mares. The stallions, and particularly the old ones, consider themselves the rightful lords of the community. They exercise their authority with very little moderation, and desperate battles are often fought among them, apparently for the mere honour of the championship. In almost every taboo there is one stallion who, by the rule of his hoof, has established a sort of supremacy, to which

\* As there are neither trees nor coal-mines on the steppe, dry weeds and straw are the chief substitutes for fuel.

† In the house of a wealthy Russian, there are almost always servants whose exclusive duty it is to look after the stoves.

his comrades tacitly submit. Factions, cabals, and intrigues, are not wanting. Sometimes there will be a general coalition against some particular stallion, who, if he get into a quarrel, is immediately set upon by ten or a dozen at once, and has no chance but to run for it. There is seldom a taboo without two or three of these objects of public animosity, who may be seen with a small troop of mares grazing apart from the main body of the herd.

The most tremendous battles are fought when two taboons happen to meet. In general the tabuntshiks are careful to keep at a respectful distance from each other; but sometimes they are away from their duty, and sometimes, where a right of pasturage is disputed, they bring their herds together out of sheer malice. The mares and foals on such occasions keep aloof, but their furious lords rush to battle with an impetuosity, of which those who are accustomed to see the horse only in a domesticated state can form but a poor conception. The enraged animals lash their tails and erect their manes like angry lions; their hoofs rattle against each other with such violence, that the noise can be heard at a considerable distance; they fasten on one another with their teeth like tigers; and their screamings and howlings are more like those of the wild beasts of the forest, than like any sounds ever heard from a tame horse. The victorious party is always sure to carry away a number of captive mares in triumph, and the exchange of prisoners is an affair certain to bring the tabuntshiks and their men by the ears, if they have been able to keep themselves out of the battle till then.

The spring, though in so many respects a season of enjoyment, is not without its drawbacks. The wolves, also, have to indemnify themselves for the severe fast of the winter, and are just as desirous as the horses to get themselves into good condition again. The foals, too, are just then most delicate, and a wolf will any day prefer a young foal to a sheep or a calf. The wolf, accordingly, is constantly prowling about the taboo during the spring, and the horses are bound to be always prepared to do battle, in defence of the younger members of their community. The wolf, as the weaker party, trusts to cunning rather than strength. For a party of wolves openly to attack a taboo at noonday would be to rush upon certain destruction, and, however severely the wolf may be pressed by hunger, he knows his own weakness too well to venture on so absurd an act of temerity. At night, indeed, if the taboo happen to be a little scattered, and the wolves in tolerable numbers, they will sometimes attempt a rush, and a general battle ensues. An admirable spirit of coalition then displays itself among the horses. On the first alarm, stallions and mares come charging up to the threatened point, and attack the wolves with an impetuosity that often puts the prowlers to instant flight. Soon, however, if they feel themselves sufficiently numerous, they return, and hover about the taboo till some poor foal straggle a few yards from the main body, when it is seized by the enemy, while the mother, springing to its rescue, is nearly certain to share its fate. Then it is that the battle begins in real earnest. The mares form a circle, within which the foals take shelter. We have seen pictures in which the horses are represented in a circle, presenting their hind hoofs to the wolves, who thus appear to have the free choice to fight or to let it alone. Such pictures are the mere result of imagination, and bear very little resemblance to the reality; for the wolf has, in general, to pay much more dearly for his partiality to horseflesh. The horses, when they attack wolves, do not turn their tails towards them, but charge upon



them in a solid phalanx, tearing them with their teeth, and trampling on them with their feet. The stallions do not fall into the phalanx, hut gallop about with streaming tails and erected manes, and seem to act at once as generals, trumpeters, and standard-bearers. Where they see a wolf they rush upon him with reckless fury, mouth to mouth, or if they use their feet as weapons of offence, it is always with the front, and not with the hinder hoof, that the attack is made. With one blow the Stallion often kills his enemy or stuns him. If so, he snatches the body tip with his teeth, and flings it to the mares, who trample upon it till it becomes hard to say what kind of animal the skin belonged to. If the Stallion, however, fail to strike a home blow at the first onset, he is likely to fight a losing battle, for eight or ten hungry wolves fasten on his throat, and never quit him till they have torn him to the ground; and if the horse be prompt and skilful in attack, the wolf is not deficient in sagacity, but watches for every little advantage, and is quick to avail himself of it; but let him not hope, even if he succeed in killing a horse, that he will be allowed leisure to pick the bones; the tabooon never fails to take ample vengeance, and the battle almost invariably terminates in the complete discomfiture of the wolves, though not, perhaps, till more than one stallion has had a leg permanently disabled, or has had his side marked for life with the impress of his enemy's teeth.

These grand battles happen but seldom, and when they do occur, it is probably always against the wolfs wish. His system of warfare is a predatory one, and his policy is rather to surprise outposts, than to meditate a general attack. He trusts more to his cunning than his strength. He will creep cautiously through the grass, taking especial care to keep to leeward of the tabooon, and he will remain crouched in ambush till he perceive a mare and her foal grazing a little apart from the rest. Even then he makes no attempt to spring upon his prey, but keeps creeping nearer and nearer, with his head leaning on his fore feet, and wagging his tail in a friendly manner, to imitate, as much as possible, the movements and gestures of a watch-dog. If the mare, deceived by the treacherous pantomime, venture near enough to the enemy, he will spring at her throat, and despatch her before she have time to raise an alarm; then, seizing on the foal, he will make off with his booty, and be out of sight perhaps before either herd or herdsman suspect his presence. It is not often, however, that the wolf succeeds in obtaining so easy a victory. If the mare detect him, an instant alarm is raised, and should the tabuntshik be near, the wolf seldom fails to enrich him with a skin, for which the fur merchant is at all times willing to pay his ten or twelve rubles. The wolf's only chance, on such occasions, is to make for the first ravine, down which he rolls head foremost, a gymnastic feat that the tabuntshik on his horse cannot venture to imitate.

As the summer draws on, the wolf becomes less troublesome to the tabooon; but a season now begins of severe suffering for the poor horses, who have more perhaps to endure from the thirst of summer, than from the hunger of winter. The heat becomes intolerable, and shade is nowhere to be found, save what the animals can themselves create, by gathering together in little groups, each seeking to place the body of his neighbour between himself and the burning rays of a merciless sun. The tabuntshik often lays himself in the centre of the group, for he also has nowhere else a shady couch to hope for.

The autumn again is a season of enjoyment. The plains are anew covered with green, the springs yield once more an abundant supply of water, and the horses gather strength at this period of abundance, to prepare themselves for the sufferings and privations of winter. In autumn, for the first time in the year, the tabooon is called on to work, but the work is not much more severe than the exertions which the restless creatures are daily imposing upon themselves while romping and rioting about on the steppe. The work in question is the threshing of the corn.

A threshing-floor, of several hundred yards square, is made, by cutting away the turf, and beating the ground into a hard solid surface. The whole is enclosed by a railing, with a gate to let the horses in and out. The sheaves of corn are then spread out and laid in strata over each other. In small farms, where only eight or ten horses are disposable for this kind of work, each horse is expected to thresh his thirty or forty sheaves; but in larger establishments, where half a tabooon can be set to work at once, a score of sheaves is the utmost ever allowed for each thresher. On such a floor, supposing the tabooon to consist of a thousand horses, five hundred score of sheaves will be laid down at once. The tabooon is then formed into two divisions. The tabuntshik and his assistants drive their five hundred steeds into the enclosure, stallions, mares, foals, and all, for when once in, the more riotous they are the better the work will be done. The gate is closed, and then begins a ball, of which it requires a lively imagination to conceive a picture. The drivers act as musicians, and their formidable *harabniks* are the fiddles that keep up the dance without intermission. The horses, terrified partly by the crackling straw under their feet, and partly by the incessant cracking of the whip over their heads, dart half frantic from one extremity to the other of their temporary prison. Millions of grains are flying about in the air, and the labourers without have enough to do to toss back the sheaves that are flung over the railing by the prancing, hard-working threshers within. This continues for about an hour. The horses are then let out, the corn turned, and the same performance repeated three times before noon. By that time, a thousand sheffel of corn have been threshed, after a fashion that looks more like a holiday diversion than a hard day's work. This description, of course, applies only to an agricultural establishment on a very large scale, and it may not be amiss to add, that in such a threshing operation more corn is lost, than is gained on many large farms in Germany.

Such is still the wild and chequered life of the horses on the steppe, and such it was in the days of Mazeppa; but scenes like those I have been describing have become scarcer in Southern Russia, in proportion as the population has become denser, and some of the larger estates have been parcelled out among a greater number of owners. Should the Russian government succeed in the favourite plan of introducing a regular system of agriculture into this portion of the empire, the large tabooons must gradually disappear, or recede farther and farther towards the confines of Tartary. Such a time, however, is yet distant. The steppe yields corn, indeed, in abundance, when cultivated; but the difficulty of transport, and the absence of all material for the construction of good roads, oppose serious obstacles to the growth of corn, except in favoured localities; as, for instance, in the immediate vicinity of rivers or of the sea.

## FLOCKS OF SHEEP.

The life of the tshabawn, or shepherd, presents a singular contrast to that of the rakish tabuntshik; but the shepherd's quiet, unobtrusive course has comparatively little to attract the attention of the stranger. The lords of the steppe, indeed, are far from undervaluing their peaceful flocks, and when the wealth of one of the princely owners is spoken of, his sheep generally serve as the standard by which the amount of his worldly possessions is measured. There are individuals in the steppe, who are said to own upwards of 100,000 woolly subjects, and most of these flocks have increased to their present amount within the last thirty years. The Walachian sheep is the most prevalent race. It is remarkable on account of the huge size of its tail, which consists of little else than a lump of fat, in great esteem among the Russians and Tartars. Merinos have, of late years, been likewise introduced, and are rapidly increasing in numbers.

The tshabawn is, for the most part, a quiet, peaceable being. His character is naturally modified by the habits of his usual associates, and, as he is not obliged to range over so wide an extent of the country as the tabuntshik, he is able to carry about with him a multitude of comforts, in which the guardian of the horses must never hope to indulge. The tshabawn has usually one or two large waggons drawn by oxen, in which he carries with him his provisions and his cooking utensils, together with the skins of the sheep that die, and those of the wolves that he has been fortunate enough to slay: for the tshabawn, with all his quietness, is as zealous a wolf-hunter as the tabuntshik, and quite as willing to increase his lawful gainings by the sale of a score of shaggy hides in the course of the season.

Of the fat-tailed sheep there are two distinct races; the Walachian and the Kalmuck. The former really carries its fat about in its tail, which grows into a shape something similar to a pear, swelling at both sides to an enormous size, and tapering to a point at the extremity. The Kalmuck sheep, which is rarely found in the western steppes, does not really carry its fat in the tail, but rather in two huge cushions, from thirty to forty pounds in weight, that strongly remind the stranger, who sees them for the first time, of the Hottentot Venus. With both, the fat in or about the tail is considered more valuable than that obtained from any other part of the animal.

The severe cold of a Pontine winter, and the parching summer by which the dance of the seasons is so strikingly diversified, are replete with trials and sufferings for all the animals most useful to man. The hurricanes that sometimes sweep across the plain are frequently attended by the most disastrous consequences to the flocks. These make not the least attempt to resist the violence of the storm, but run away in a perfect panic before the wind, and are blown by thousands into the streams and ravines by which the steppes are intersected. The dull Russian shepherds, on these occasions, are of little value, and the dogs are not much above their masters in point of intelligence. The most sensible members of these communities are generally the goats, without whom a Pontine shepherd would never be able to keep his woolly charge in any kind of order. To every hundred sheep, therefore, three or four goats are invariably associated, to make up, by their wit and sprightliness, for the silliness of their companions. The sheep



alone could never be brought to face a Pontine gale of wind, or to march into a ravine, and would often be completely dispersed in passing through one of the reedy labyrinths by which the rivers are usually fringed. On all these occasions the goats are found of great service to the tshabawn. They are easily brought to face any wind that will at all bear facing; they lead the way boldly down the most rugged descents, and the sheep, by the ease with which they may be made to follow the example thus set them, seem to show their consciousness of the superior sense of their sturdy companions.

About Easter, the *ottara*, or flock, quits its winter quarters, which, except on a few estates, are little better than those provided for the poor taboo horses. Until the autumnal storms are no longer endurable, the sheep remain on the steppe, and then return to winter in the miserable enclosures, where a little shelter against the north wind is mostly the only shelter ever considered necessary.

The movements of an *ottara* are, of course, much less erratic than those of a *taboon*. If the tshabawn comes to a fine pasture-ground, he seldom leaves it till the grass has been eaten away; and even when on the march, his encampment for the night is often only two or three miles from the spot whence he started in the morning. The tshabawn's baggage-waggon usually leads the van, its ungreased wheels, with most inharmonious sounds, inviting the woolly community to follow in the track; but the sheep are no early risers, and love not to have their morning meditations interrupted till the night dew has dried away, and fitted the grass for their enjoyment. The taste of the sheep is the very reverse of the horse's. The latter never enjoys his meal more than at night, while the former likes to keep good hours, and seldom stirs from his bed till morning, but amuses the witching hours by a careful repetition of the last day's studies in the science of mastication. In good weather, to guide the flock is an easy task. The tshabawn follows his waggon, and the sheep follow him, his men hanging upon the flanks and the rear, to drive in stragglers, and to accelerate the progress of those who are all too dilatory in their movements. Their long *irliks* are the sceptres with which the shepherds occasionally enforce their authority. These are crooks, nearly twelve feet in length, and may at any moment be converted into most formidable weapons, either of attack or defence. The wolf, who has tasted one blow from the *irlik* of a tshabawn, is seldom fated to experience a second.

In bad weather, and particularly during the autumnal storms, matters wear, as we have already hinted, a very different aspect. The wolves in spring are a constant plague, no doubt, and there are few kinds of vermin that abound more than the wolves do in the steppe; but a vigilant tshabawn may be on his guard against a wolf; and besides, the more the wolves show themselves, the greater will be the number of skins to be disposed of at the end of the season. Against the snow-storm of the steppe, however, vigilance can avail but little; and whereas the wolf can but rarely succeed in the capture even of a single sheep, thousands may be buried in the snow-drift of a *viuga*, or blown over the edge of a precipice into a ravine, or into the yeasty waves of the easily agitated Euxine. Not a year passes away of which the tshabawn has not to recount various disasters caused by the *viugas*; and I can scarcely present a more lively picture of such a scene to my readers than will be found in the words of

an old tshabawn, who endeavoured to give me some idea of the hardships to which the pastoral life on the steppes is constantly subjected.

"We were once grazing the ottara of a rich Bulgarian," said the old man; "it was in the steppe of Otshakoff, and there were seven of us, with 2000 sheep and 150 goats. It was in March, and we had just driven out for the first time. The weather seemed mild, there was some grass already on the ground, so that we dreamt of no mishap. In the evening it began to rain, and the wind was bitter cold. Soon the rain turned to snow, and our wet cloaks were frozen as hard as boards. A few hours after sunset, we had a regular Siberian viuga, from the north-east, whistling about our ears, till seeing and hearing became equally impossible. We had not got far from home yet, so we tried to find our way back, but it was impossible to make the sheep face the wind; and even the goats, who will face any thing but a viuga, were beginning to run before the storm. To keep the flock from scampering away was impossible, all we could attempt was to keep them at least together. In this way we had to race it all the night, and in the morning nothing but snow was to be seen all around us. The viuga raged all that day, and the poor sheep were more wild and frightened even than during the night. Sometimes we gave up all as lost, but then we roused ourselves again, and ran with the screaming, bleating flock, while the oxen trotted after with the waggon, and the dogs came howling behind. The poor goats were all lost or frozen to death the very first day, on which we ran at least fifty or sixty versts, leaving a track of dead sheep behind us the whole way. In the evening the poor beasts ran less wildly, for they were fairly exhausted with hunger and fatigue. We also were knocked up. Two of our party reported themselves sick, and crept under the mats and skins in the waggon, while the rest of us had only time to take a little bread and snow to sustain life. Night came, but no house or home was anywhere to be seen, for the Otshakoff steppe is one of the wildest countries in the world. That night was worse than the first, and as we knew the storm was driving us right upon the coast, we expected every moment to be blown, with all our stupid cattle, into the sea. Another of our men fell sick, so we packed him in the waggon along with the rest. We all thought that night would have been our last. About morning, the wind, luckily, shifted about, and drove us towards some houses, that we were able to distinguish through the drifting snow; but though they were not more than thirty feet away from us, it was quite impossible to make the foolish sheep turn aside. On they went right before the wind, in spite of all we could do, and we soon lost sight of the houses; but the good people had heard the howling of our dogs, and guessed what was the matter. They were German colonists, and some fifteen or twenty of them came to our help, and then we managed to stop the sheep and drive them under the sheds and into the houses. We had lost all our goats, and about 500 of our sheep; but many of the poor things died after we got them under shelter, for in their fright they kept so close together, that many were smothered. We thanked God and the good Germans for our safety, for half a verst farther we should have come to the coast, rising twenty fathoms high above the sea. The Germans did all they could to make us and our sick men comfortable; but some of us were a long time before we recovered from the effects of that bout. Ah, sir, a tshabawn has a hard life of it, for he must look for many scenes such as I have been telling you of."

In fair weather, the scene is of course a very different one. In his roomy waggon, the tshabawn carries with him a multitude of little comforts; and if he comes upon a piece of good grazing-ground, he establishes himself there for days together. His little kitchen is immediately put into order; one kettle simmers away for himself and his men, and another for his dogs; a fierce and formidable set of animals that, though not to be compared for intelligence with the dogs of a German shepherd, are invaluable in a country swarming with wolves. While one of the party acts as cook, the others are not without their occupation. One has perhaps been stripping the skin off a dead sheep, another has been acting the physician towards the sick members of the ottara, while several have found ample work in milking; for in a large flock there are often not less than five or six hundred sheep to be milked. This milk, placed in wooden vessels, is exposed to the sun, and converted into a kind of cheese known throughout the steppe under the name of *brinse*. This cheese, as soon as the whey has been drained off, is packed into goatskins, with the fur turned inside. The skin gives it a peculiar flavour, but this, according to the opinion of the southern Russians, is one of its chief recommendations.

Nor are they without their sports while the *mamaliga* is simmering away in the sociable kettle. A day rarely passes away without a wolf-chase; a hare may frequently be run down, and if the traps are attended to, many a piece of feathered game may be made to vary the monotony of their daily bill of fare. Nor are they without frequent guests to share the produce of their chase. Peasants from Podolia in search of work, soldiers on furlough, deserters from the army, and runaway serfs from the interior of Russia, are constantly wandering about the steppe; and the tshabawn, with that ready hospitality seldom found wanting in any nomadic tribe, makes every stranger welcome to his frugal meal. The poor fugitive may pass the night securely under shelter of the tshabawn's dogs, whom no uninvited stranger ever ventures to approach, and in the morning the wanderer will seldom be dismissed without some fresh token of the kindness of his host.

When the evening meal is done, if the weather is fine, and no wolf in view, men and dogs are sure to pass an hour or two stretched before their blazing fire of dry reeds and grass. There the tshabawns confer on the politics of the steppe, or discuss the relative merits of the grazing-grounds to which it will be most expedient to direct their next march. The council ended, the arrangements for the night remain to be made. The waggon is the lodging of the principal tshabawn, the *ataman* of the ottara, as he is frequently called, and here also the guests of the encampment are usually accommodated. The other tshabawns drive the sheep as closely together as possible, and then form, with their dogs, a complete circle round the flock. Each man throws his furs, that serve him for mattress and coverlet, on the spot assigned to him, and between every two beds the same measured interval occurs. The next thing is to make the beds for the dogs. This is soon done. So many dogs as there are, so many rugs are provided; and as each dog knows his own rug by the smell, all that is necessary is to lay the rug on the spot where it is wished the dog should take up his station for the night, and a complete *cordon sanitaire* is formed. A camp thus fortified may generally defy the wolf; still there are few nights pass away without an alarm, for the wolves will hover for many successive days and nights around a flock, in the hope of espying,



sooner or later, an unguarded point, or of taking advantage of the panic into which the ottara is sometimes thrown by a sudden storm.

#### THE HERDS OF HORNED CATTLE.

The wide unbounded extent of the steppe makes almost every thing wild that dwells there, and as the horse assumes in a short time an air of wildness, so also the ox that ranges over the grassy ocean, is a very different kind of animal from the ox attached to a well ordered farm. On the steppe also you hear of house oxen and steppe oxen. The former are attached to the household, work for their owner, and graze only near his house.

The breed of cows that prevails on the steppe gives but little milk. The German colonists have, in consequence, introduced cattle from Germany, and the same has been done by many of the principal landowners. The cattle of foreign breed, however, are still insignificant in numbers compared to the original race. This race, which extends over Bessarabia, New Russia, Little Russia, Podolia, Ukraine, and a part of Moldavia, is large, long-legged, with long horns, and always of a white or silver-gray colour, differing in many points from the Polish, the Hungarian, or the Tartar breeds. It is from these herds of the steppe, that Russia derives her chief supply of tallow, in which articles she carries on so extensive a trade with all parts of the world. The markets of St. Petersburg and Moscow also are supplied with beef, almost entirely from the herds on the steppe.

Such a herd of wild oxen is called a *Tshereda*, and the herdsman who has the charge of it is called a *Tsherednik*. Such a *tshereda* consists of 100 to 800 head of cattle, and is a source of more profit to its owner than a *taboon*. inasmuch as an ox, for the sake of his tallow, will always command a purchaser more readily than a wild, vicious, unbroken horse.

In many respects the life of a *tsherednik* bears a great resemblance to that of a *tabuntshik*. In summer the cattle are out in the plain, and in winter they are scantily protected by their airy sheds. The bulls and cows that are kept for breeding are never sold, but live and die on the steppe; but the young beasts are sold to the *prekashyshiks*, the commissioners of the St. Petersburg and Moscow cattle-dealers, or the great tallow-boiling establishments. These men are continually travelling about from herd to herd, and as soon as they have bought a sufficient number of oxen send them off to their places of destination, under the care of their *gontshiks*, or drivers.

The *tsheredniks*, like the *tshabawns*, serve on foot, the ox being less wild, and more easy to manage than the horse. The ox is more choice indeed in his food, but then his meal is more quickly despatched, and his afternoon nap lasts all the longer. He bears the rain but ill, and is very impatient of heat, but in a snow-storm he is less apt to get frightened, and pursues his course regardless whether the *viuga* blow from the front or the rear. He will also endure thirst much better, and can go for two days together without drinking.

With the wolf the ox is much on the same terms as the horse, though it has been observed that the wolf attacks a *tshereda* much less frequently than a *taboon*. The ox, on account of his long horns, is a much more formidable enemy than the horse, and generally pins his enemy to the ground at the first attack. Nevertheless, the wolf does hover occasionally about the herd, and if a lame or sickly ox happen to lag behind his companions, he frequently falls a victim to his vigilant and remorseless foe.

## THE TALLOW HOUSES.

The exports from St. Petersburg are estimated at 120,000,000 rubles annually, and a third of the whole is made up of tallow. From the other Russian ports, the quantity exported of this article may amount to about 30,000,000 more. For these 70,000,000 of rubles, about 250,000,000 of pounds of tallow are furnished to the rest of the world, providing the chief supply of soap and candles to England, France, Germany, Scandinavia, Italy, and the other countries of Europe. This is without including the extra quantity which the Russians themselves consume. Now, nearly the whole of this enormous quantity is furnished by the Pontine steppes, which may, therefore, be looked on as the main enlighteners and purifiers of the civilized world.

At a very early period of history,—perhaps so early as the times of Herodotus, but certainly in those of the Milesians,—tallow was an article of export from Scythia. At present the large tallow-manufactories, or *Salgans*, as they are called, are exclusively in the hands of the natives of Great Russia, who have their establishments in all parts of the steppe. They buy the poor oxen up by hundreds and thousands, and after fattening them up for a season, drive them to the salgans to be slaughtered. If the season is good, that is to say tolerably moist, so that the animals may fatten well, the speculation is likely to turn out well, but a long continued drought is ruinous in its consequences. The tallow-boilers remain empty, and the poor meager ox has nothing left but his skin with which to pay the price of his board. After such a season, the owners of the salgans usually close their books, and declare themselves insolvent, for they are seldom possessed of much capital, and generally carry on their operations with the money advanced by the merchants of the seaport towns.

Towards the end of summer the tallow-boiler begins to drive his oxen in small parties towards the *salgan*, generally a spacious courtyard surrounded by the buildings necessary for the unsavoury manufacture. There are large shambles in which to slaughter the oxen, and houses containing enormous boilers, in which to boil down their meat. Other buildings are set apart for the salting of the hides, besides which there are counting-houses, and dwellings for the workmen. In summer the whole establishment is untenanted, unless by dogs and birds of prey, who hover about all the year round, being attracted by the nauseous smell of the place, for during autumn the soil becomes so saturated with blood, that the smell continues for the rest of the year, despite the viugs of winter and the north west storms of the spring.

To the dogs this smell appears to be attractive enough. To the olfactory nerves of an unsophisticated stranger it is infinitely disgusting, but how much more so must it be to those of the poor oxen who are made to walk to this their scene of execution. They seem as they approach the place, to become conscious of what awaits them. They smell the odious *salgan* afar off, grow more and more restless the nearer they approach it, and it is often only by main force that they can be dragged towards the fatal enclosure. Their piteous bellowing is then enough to awaken compassion in any but the hearts of their executioners. To get them into the salgan neither force nor blows would always suffice, but there are attached to

every place of the kind a number of tame oxen who have become familiarized to the scenes enacted there, and who are taught to entice their bellowing brethren to their fate. These traitors are brought out and mingled with the herd, they afterwards lead the doomed and despairing multitude to the scene of slaughter; and when once the poor creatures have entered the courtyard, the gate closes upon them, and they never come out again except in the shape of tallow and leather.

About one hundred oxen will be driven into the yard at a time, and of these twenty or thirty go into the slaughterhouse, in which six or eight butchers are kept briskly at work. They are horrid ruffians to look at, in their sheepskin jackets, their leathern breeches, and their high boots, unsmear'd by ought save the gore in which they are constantly wading. The villanous stink and the villanous spectacle in the slaughterhouse exceed any that the mind of man can imagine. The business is generally carried on during the rainy part of the season, so that the whole salgan is soon converted into a swamp of blood and mud.

As great expedition is required, the business of the slaughterhouse is carried on in a hurried manner, and the poor animals are subjected to much unnecessary suffering. It would require more hands and more time than can be afforded in a salgan, to put an ox to death in the artist-like manner customary among our butchers. In the salgan the beasts are left loose, the big-booted murderers enter the place with their heavy axes, and striking each animal a tremendous blow on the back, break its spine, and so bring it to the ground. Then snorting and bellowing the poor victims lie upon the ground, twenty or thirty of them at a time, helpless and unresisting, but a considerable time elapses before the whole of them can be put out of their pain.

The ox has but little fat upon his loins and back; and, therefore, after the skin has been drawn off, three or four poods of meat are cut off to be offered afterwards for sale in the bazaar. None but the poor, however, buy it; for the blow on the spine always has the effect of injuring the meat. The remainder of the carcass is cut up, and every thing cast into the boiler, with the exception of the intestines, which are given to the swine, of whom there are always a large number at every salgan wallowing in the miry gore, and undergoing the process of being fattened up for the market.

At every salgan there are usually from four to six boilers, each large enough to contain the meat of ten or fifteen oxen. A little water is put into the boilers to prevent "the soup" from burning. The fat collects at the top, and is skimmed off with large ladles, and before it has quite cooled it is poured into the casks in which it is afterwards shipped. This first fat is the best, and is quite white. The second has already a yellowish tinge. If a sufficient number of casks is not at hand, the hides are sown together, and the tallow poured into them, till the whole assumes again a form something like that the animal wore when living. Of these tallow-stuffed oxen a large number are usually seen standing about the salgans.

Another harvest of fat is obtained by afterwards subjecting the mash of bones and meat to huge presses, but this after-tallow is of a very inferior quality, of a dark brown colour, and is rarely exported. It is used for greasing wheels, and for any other purpose for which a coarse kind of grease is required.

An ox in good condition will give from seven to eight poods (from 250



to 290 pounds) of tallow, which is generally worth from eleven to fifteen rubles a pood. The article is always in demand, and such is the eagerness to obtain it, that not only is a part of the price often paid beforehand, while the oxen are still grazing on the steppe, but the wealthy merchants of Odessa and their clerks may constantly be seen parading their gay habiliments among the filthy abominations of the salgan, and crying out incessantly for tallow, tallow, and more tallow! The cashier, meanwhile, is busily engaged in the counting-house. The steward of the estate comes in to receive the rent of the land on which the herd has fattened during the spring and summer; the workmen come in to receive their wages; cattle-dealers come in to contract for the supply of so many hundred oxen; while some merchant standing by is ready, in his eagerness for the greasy treasure, to pay in advance for the tallow that has yet to be grown under the hides of those oxen; a colonist comes in to bargain for the fattening up of some 200 hogs, which he afterwards receives back walking masses of hogslard, too yellow and coarse, however, for the market, till the gruntern have been a little refined by sundry good feeds of corn; Greeks from Constantinople come, as they did in the days when Olbia flourished; some wealthy nobleman perhaps is anxious to farm the whole salgan for a few weeks, having some thousand of oxen ready for the kettle, but no establishment of his own to boil them into fat and silver rubles; a swineherd comes to buy sundry waggon-loads of the pressed meat wherewith to treat his interesting charges on the steppe; soap-boilers are there to bargain for the fat, turners to buy the horns, and tanners to carry away the hides; the Turkish captains come eagerly to obtain the tallow in its greatest purity at the fountain-head, for tallow is too much esteemed by the gourmands of Constantinople to be idly wasted in enlightening their darkness; in short, however busily Death may be at work, there is, meanwhile, no want either of life or bustle in the salgan. Nor is it men only that are eagerly running to and fro. The shaggy, long-haired dogs of the steppe arrive in swarms to fatten on the refuse, or to lap the thickening gore in the loathsome well into which it has been drained. Even more numerous are the white sea-gulls, who, under their dovelike plumage, hide the hearts of vultures. They become so tame and bold in the salgan, that they walk fearlessly among the workmen, and will scarcely rise from their meal when you drive them with a stick.

Such is the hideous scene presented by one of these dens of murder, where, in addition to its other delights, the air is heavy with myriads of insects that seem to have been bred by the soil, soaked as it is with blood.

A workman in one of these salgans, besides his board, earns about seventy or eighty rubles a month; and as the work generally lasts some twelve or thirteen weeks, there are always candidates enough for the places. In the neighbourhood of Odessa there are seven salgans, and in these, probably, 25,000 oxen meet their deaths every year, without reckoning the countless numbers of sheep who share the same fate. In the vicinity of Kherson, Taganrog, Nikolayeff, Saratoff, Kisheneff, and other places, salgans will be found on an equally large scale. Many of the nobles again have salgans of their own; and in fact, throughout the whole of southern Russia is man labouring in the same barbarous way for the *enlightenment* of Europe. To look on the graceful taper that burns so innocently upon my table, and sheds so soft and cheerful a light upon me,—and then to think of the filthy bloody scenes in which it had its birth!

## THE INTERIOR OF RUSSIA.

### KHARKOFF.

IN former times, when the dominant grand duchy of Russia had its centre in Kieff, the whole of Little Russia may have been united under one sceptre. After the fall of the old duchy, a number of smaller principalities were formed at Halitsh (Galicia), Vlodimir (Lodimira), Tshernigoff, &c. These in time became a prey of the Tartars and Poles, of the latter particularly, who after the decline of the Mongolian empire gradually appropriated the whole of Little Russia. Oppressed by the Poles, numbers of the Little Russians, the unmarried, particularly young men capable of bearing arms (Kasakki) wandered forth, and settled in various political societies in the desert steppes, at the mouths of the Dniester, Don, and Dnieper, where they fought and plundered, partly on their own account, partly in the pay of others—Tartars, Turks, Poles, Great Russians, and others. At the head of each of these Kasak communities was a Hetman, as general or chief of the republic.\* By degrees these Kasak colonies spread themselves over the whole steppe to the south, which they wrenched from the Tartars, as far as the Volga and the Ural, and one Kasak colony, extending its excursions still farther, conquered Siberia. The most powerful of these Kasak states were those of the Dnieper, of the Don, and those of Zaporog. During the flourishing time of their independence, the Kasaks were the terror of all the countries bordering on the steppes, and as they were as skilful in guiding their little boats as in managing their horses, they became the pests of the Turkish provinces bordering on the Black Sea. They fell upon and plundered in their piratical expeditions Trebizond, Sinope, Constantinople, and other Turkish cities, sometimes at the instigation of the Poles and Muscovites, and sometimes at their own.

As the empire of the Moscovites developed itself, the Kasaks became united with them, partly by treaty, partly by force and custom, and now all obey the sceptre of the czars, with the exception of a few beyond the Danube, who still serve the Padishah.

Under those czars who drove the Poles further back to the west, many of the Kasaks were formed into regiments and established on the frontier (*u kraïna*) to defend it against the Poles. It was in the districts Sumi, Kharkoff, Akhtyrka, Tsum, and others, that these border militia were

\* Among the Little Russians, a chief, particularly the chief of the whole body, is called a Hetman. Attman is not the same: many inferior officials—for example, the bailiffs of the villages—are called "Attman."

located. The country was then probably thinly peopled by the Malorossians; but the protection promised by the Great Russians allured other settlers. The "*Slobodes*" of the Kasak grew in time to be considerable towns, and husbandmen took possession of the surrounding fertile land, and there founded so great a number of villages, that these districts are now among the most populous in Russia. Although the Moscovites soon overstepped these old limits, still from old custom, they spoke of the Kasak slobodes of the frontier (*Slobody u kraïna*), and thus the name of Ukraine, or frontier-land, remained to a long narrow strip of Little Russia.

As the Moscovites fixed these free warriors (*Kasakki*) on their frontiers, as a defence against the Tartars and the Poles, so did the latter people on their frontier against the Tartars and the Turks, and as in their language also, "on the frontier," is "*u kraïna*," the name Ukraine came among them also into use for the southern portion of what is now the government of Kieff, and this country, in distinction from the Russian, was called the Polish Ukraine. The lands lying between the governments of Poltava, Tshernigoff, and northern Kieff were never reckoned in either Ukraine, and were properly called Little Russia (*Malorossiia*). The geographers of western Europe made one country of the whole, to which they gave the name of Ukraine, probably because they knew it only from one of Voltaire's most interesting works,—interesting, among other reasons, for its numerous blunders and gross misrepresentations,—"*The Life of Charles the Twelfth*." Even on the greater part of our maps of Russia, the name of Ukraine stands in great letters over the whole of Lesser Russia, on both sides of the Dnieper, in which country the name is entirely unknown. The people call themselves simply "*Malorossiani*," or Little Russians. As, in fact, the two designations had their origin with the rulers of the lands, the Poles and Great Russians, the official name of Polish Ukraine has almost vanished with the Polish state, and that of Russian Ukraine is only used by the people, and applied to the former "*Kasak Slobody*," distinguishing them from the governments of Poltava, Tshernigoff, and Kieff, Little Russia properly so-called. In official documents, this territory is now called the government of Kharkoff, or the Ukraine Slobody.

The capital of the Ukraine, Kharkoff, is decidedly one of the most interesting and important places in the empire, and occupies one of the first places in the first rank of provincial cities. Its population, 25,000, ranges with those of Kieff, Kursk, Tula, and Novgorod. The commerce is much more active than that of Kieff. Its university rivals those of Vilua and Casan; its fairs and markets may challenge those of Nishney Novgorod.

Like most Russian cities, Kharkoff has a very promising exterior. The principal buildings, the university, government offices, the convent, the seminary, the convent of noble young ladies, the principal church, the great Gostinnoi Dvor, &c., stand on the high promontory between the two rivers, the Kharkovka and the Lopau, which forms a wide platform on the summit, gently declining towards the point. On one side of the promontory the Moscow-street winds away over a bridge across the Lopau, on the other, that of Poltava over another bridge across the Kharkovka. These are the main streets, and both are adorned with a number of new, and, for the greater part, very elegant houses. The majority of the other streets run into these, and several large public squares. The houses are of stone, with iron roofs painted green; these form the core of the city,



but they are surrounded by a strange, ill-looking suburb, consisting of a multitude of little Kasak huts of clay and wicker-work. The streets are unpaved, with one exception, the Moscow-street, and for that they have made use of so soft a stone that it would have been better to let it alone altogether. When the stone is a little worn, this street will, beyond a doubt, be the worst of all. In several there are trottoirs, mostly of wood. After a long-continued rain, when the close black earth of the steppes dissolves to a deep, thick, excessively tough, slimy pudding, it is difficult to imagine the extraordinary spectacle presented by the traffic of foot-passengers, and of the many vehicles in the streets of the city. The only means the people have of forming any thing like a firm footing is by filling up the holes with dung. Wood is too dear to be applied to such a use. Disagreeable as this material for repairing may appear to be, the use of it is quite unavoidable in this woodless and stoneless land, and a man need only attempt to walk across the streets of Kharkoff in dirty weather, to know how to value this discovery at its real worth. There are parts of the town where you can only get along by jumping from one dunghill to another. "You will be able to come to tea with me very easily this evening," said a Kharkoff friend to me, "for I have had the road up to my house door fresh laid with dung this morning."

At times any intercourse between well-dressed people would be impossible in Kharkoff, if they were not so well provided with horses and carriages. There are more coaches-arid-four and coaches-and-six to be seen driving about here than in six German capitals put together. In the capital of the Ukraine it is quite usual to drive with six horses to visit a neighbour, and the land is often so deep that all six have enough to do. For the non-possessors of carriages there are droshkies to be hired at a more reasonable rate than in the north. For 200 rubles (9*l.*) a pair of good horses may be bought in Kharkoff. More than 200,000 rubles, reckoning from the fares and the number of hired carriages employed, must be expended by neighbours in driving about to visit each other—a sum which, in any city of like size in western Europe, would go to the profit of the shoemakers.

There are four booksellers' shops in Kharkoff—three Russian, where they sell books by the pound and learning by the ell, and one French, whose owner boasts of valuing his intellectual wares by their intrinsic worth. For his books he finds a sale by combining with his literary dealings a trade in wine, liqueurs, and cigars. Nevertheless, some progress is making, for Kharkoff contained but one bookseller fifteen years ago.

Almost every Russian town of any consequence has its public gardens; even towns like Akerman, in Bessarabia, and places of moderate importance in Siberia. Kharkoff, of course, is not wanting in this particular. These gardens are generally called botanical gardens, probably because young plants and seeds are sold there, or because the Russian public has misunderstood the word. If these gardens are not to be compared with similar ones in German cities, it is certainly interesting to hear that such things exist at all in Russian provincial towns. The efforts of the government to procure the people all possible opportunities for instructive amusement are highly praiseworthy; it were to be wished, on the other hand, that the people could be commended for meeting the efforts of the government, and zealously profiting by what is offered. The real botanical garden, for the use of the university, is in the neighbourhood of the one that bears the name.

I went, on my first arrival, to an hotel in Nicholas-place, in the upper part of the town—a gray house, with an enormous saloon, and a multitude of smaller rooms. They gave me good tea, and the cookery was not despicable. Some larks and nightingales, whose cages were suspended near the great chandelier in the middle, amused us with their song during our breakfast, assisted by a Russian officer, who strummed away on a piano-forte considerably out of tune. The bedchambers were miserably deficient in accommodation; there were bedsteads without beds, toilets without glasses, and washstands without soap. I asked for a towel. "Ah, sir," said the waiter, an old Cossack, "towels are to be had in Moscow, but there are none here in hotels." Travellers, in short, are expected to bring half their household utensils with them. Portraits of some Greek leaders (Kanaris, Bozzaris, and others), of Moscow manufacture, after Cossack originals, decorated the walls; and on the door a large printed placard was nailed, in which a dentist recommended himself to the public, asserting that he had passed his examination at *all* the Russian and German universities, and possessed no less than 1200 certificates from kings, princes, and celebrated men. Twelve hundred make sixty score; and if this man, for every score of infirm royal teeth, got only an additional dozen of common people to operate upon, he must have had tolerable practice in his time.

I was not a little rejoiced when my letters of recommendation procured me better accommodation in the house of a wealthy merchant, who received me kindly. His property was valued at 17,000,000 rubles, which he had accumulated from the profits of selling brandy—a privilege which is farmed out by the government. Mr. T., a town-counsellor and *potshetnoi grashdanin* (highly honourable burgher), was born in some peasant's hut, a serf of the Sheremetieff or Demidoff. He is now an *otkuptshik* (brandy-farmer), and has for a number of years secured the privilege of supplying the people of St. Petersburg, and all the cities in ten other Russian governments, with spirits. A large part of this 17,000,000 rubles is, therefore, probably made up from the billions of copeks paid by the *mushiks* for their drams. Mr. T. has in his service a guard of several thousand men (*obyeshthiks*, or riders), armed with large whips and iron rods, to watch the towns he farms, and prevent the introduction of liquor from other quarters. Millions pass yearly through his hands, and he keeps up a correspondence with half Russia. During my stay in Kharkoff one of his sons arrived from one of the governments of Siberia, with a million and a half in ready money, the product of his speculations for the last three years. I could not think without a shudder of the millions who had swallowed the fiery poison to swell that heap!

Many will inquire curiously about the counting-house arrangements, which enable Mr. T. to carry on business on such a scale. Every grocer in a large way with us has his counting-house, and there are milk-dealers in London, who keep clerks and bookkeepers. It may excite some astonishment, therefore, among our merchants, to hear that Mr. T., who with the money raised by farming brandy, has founded a multitude of establishments of other kinds, and has manufactories, sheep-farms, landed estates, &c., scattered throughout the empire, has no other accounts relative to his far-extended commerce than what he is able to carry in his own head. He has much natural ability, and an astonishing memory for figures. He knows all the governments of Russia in detail, retains the most exact statistics of Russian thirst in his head, and knows to a hair how much strong

liquor this or that city consumes, and how far he may go in his contracts with government. In his minute knowledge of his native land, obtained by multiplied experience and countless journeys, his main strength lies, and if he did not find it to his interest to keep all this a profound secret, he could certainly give more minute statistical information than the journals of St. Petersburg, and much more trustworthy. His second assistant in his business is his reckoning-board, on which he pushes the beads backwards and forwards till he sees that so many hundred thousands clear profit will be the result of his labours. Bookkeeping by double entry he knows nothing about. Except the profits, there is nothing double in his business, all is in the highest degree simple. The contracts with his agents, riders, &c., are concluded by word of mouth, and in a hundred cases the presence of the principal, who flies from place to place with his six fleet horses, accomplishes what a voluminous correspondence would leave but half accomplished. Mr. T. has three sons, to one of whom he has made over the Siberian portion of his business, another overlooks St. Petersburg, and a third the territory about the Volga. These gentlemen travel about as their father does, and come occasionally to Kharkoff to give an account of their stewardship, and empty their purses into the common stock.

Mr. T. is moreover a man quite *comme il faut*, with a shaven chin, French polish, and a due allowance of stars, and stands, in fact, some steps too high to be interesting to an observer of Russian manners. His wife dresses in the newest fashion, and keeps a French cook, and his daughters are betrothed to officers. I begged a friend of mine, therefore, to go a little lower down in the scale of society, and introduce me into the house of a merchant of ordinary standing. Thus I made the acquaintance of the millionaire, A., to whom my friend presented me in the Gostinnoi Dvor, and by whom I was invited to dinner. I had already seen several streets in Moscow, which I had been told belonged to this gentleman. He lived, however, at Kharkoff, probably because it is a cheaper place. His dwelling-house is one of those extensive and desolate palaces so common in Russia, which seem formed after the pattern of a gigantic empire. The mansion has its courtyards and vestibules, as if it were the residence of some great lord of the soil, instead of a simple citizen; portals and columns, like some Grecian temple, rather than a burgher's dwelling. In the interior we found long ranges of lofty, spacious, gaily-painted rooms, of which the greater part seemed destined to no other purpose than to swell the number; in one were a dozen of chairs and one table, in another a divan, in a third nothing at all, in a fourth a press with some old plate which the owner took out to show us as heir-looms inherited from his father; in every one there were pictures of saints in broad gilded frames. Mr. D. received us with a hundred obeisances and thousands of thanks for coming, and presented me to some of his friends, to whom I was obliged to name myself, Gregor Feodorowitsch.\* There were no ladies present; but Mr. A. led me through the rooms to his own and his lady's sleeping-room, where no other furniture was to be seen than the richly curtained and gilded matrimonial couch. At one corner of it stood his wife, dressed in a large flowered

\* Gregor is George, Feodorowitsch may mean Frederick's, or Henry's, or Edward's son, for the Russians generally translate the German names they have not, by Feodor, and as on the whole they believe the greater number of Germans are named Frederick, a Feodor Feodorowitsch means nearly the same as a German.



sarafan, and kakoshnik glittering with gold and pearls. She was picking at the lace of the bed-curtains as we entered. It is usually in their bed-chambers that Russian merchants introduce strangers to their wives. I apologized to the lady for my bad Russian, and she assured me that she knew not a syllable of German or French, but she had a "*Niemetzki utshitel*" (a German tutor) for her children, who knew every thing, and I might speak with him what language I chose. At dinner I encountered this marvellous "*utshitel*," whose very indifferent German promised little for his other acquirements. There was no want of servants, and one heavy dish followed another in tedious succession; but there was little salt to the conversation. Mr. A— had generally his mouth too full of other things to permit himself more than an occasional friendly smile. His "*sup-ruga*" (wife) was dumb according to Russian notions of female decorum, and the "*utshitel*," I believe, was ashamed of his bad German. After dinner we went into another room to the dessert, after old Russian fashion. On a round table stood a number of dishes with various preserved fruits from Kieff, which a servant carried round on a large waiter. For all this there was one gold spoon, and only one, with which every guest helped himself to what he liked, and after he had bathed his gums therewith, the spoon walked over to his neighbour. Fortunately for me, I was complimented with the first suck. After dinner my host told me that he was obliged to absent himself on business, but that his eoach-and-four was ready, if I chose to take a drive with the *utshitel*, which I did. and as nothing causes me *ennui*, even this served for a diversion. Mr. A— is the representative of a whole class; and among all the Russian merchants, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, the same style of luxury is found, the same ready hospitality, and the same very peculiar mixture of superficial civilization, with the intensest barbarism.

There are many wealthy merchants in Kharkoff, and they have by no means all risen from the condition of serfs; many free families have devoted themselves to commerce for a long series of years; and in all times there have been wealthy merchants in Russia, who have rendered their country essential service with their riches. Minin, the citizen of Novgorod, is spoken of as the saviour of his country, with the patriotic Prince Posharski, and he is not a solitary example. Yet, on the whole, the merchants, as a class, have advanced far less than the nobles, and by no means partake in a like measure of western civilization.

At the time of my arrival in Kharkoff the whole Ukraine nobility were assembled to deliberate on their affairs and choose new officers. Such assemblies of nobles *Vuibors* (committees) take place in every government; and as little is known about them, I will here relate what I saw of them in Kharkoff, particularly as the *Vuibors* of the Ukraine nobility, which retain some traces of independence from the old Cossack times, have a peculiar interest of their own.

In every Russian government there is a *Dvoryanstava sobranie* (house of assembly for nobles), containing a large hall and some smaller rooms. The hall is used for the meetings of the deputies of the nobles, and for the balls, dinners, and so forth given on the occasion of their assembling. There are galleries for spectators, and in the centre of one of the shorter sides of the parallelogram, a tribune for the president's table. Along the sides of the hall, taken lengthwise, stand eleven green-covered tables with chairs, for the deputies of the eleven circles of the Ukraine. Over the

table against the wall, the arms of the circle are suspended; the circle of Valki, to signify the abundance of fruit which it produces, bears plums and pears in its escutcheon; the circle of Sumi (sack) two sacks in remembrance of the origin of the name of the place, which served formerly as a depot for the Cossacks to store up their booty. At every table the marshal of the nobles for the circle presides, and over the whole assembly presides the marshal of the government, who represents the nobles of his own province on all occasions.

The assembly of the Ukraine nobles consisted of several hundred individuals, and, during their sittings, the square in front of the building was thronged with more equipages than the space in front of any West European parliament-house. Indeed, in all outward appearances the assembly was extremely brilliant. All the deputies were in green uniforms, with gold-laced red collars, and silver-hilted swords. Nor was there any lack of animation or of speeches, and several members were pointed out to me as men distinguished for their eloquence. When a paper of any kind was to be read, a government notification, or any other kind of document, a sabre was struck against the floor or upon the table, in the ancient Cossack fashion, and immediate silence followed. The reader then went in succession to each corner of the room and read his paper. Considerable excitement was frequently manifested, and several of the speakers were loudly applauded. This was particularly the case when the marshal of the nobles, a Kovalevski, in resigning the dignity which he had held for three years, was moved to tears as he thanked his brethren for the kindness they had shown him. The whole assembly rose from their seats and came thronging around the marshal; the old man was urged to allow himself to be proposed once more as a candidate, but he steadfastly declined the proffered distinction.

Hereupon the several candidates for the office presented themselves, made their salutations, and were more or less applauded, for which they expressed their thanks, by laying their hands on their hearts, and making short speeches. One, whom his own vanity, rather than the confidence of the public, had probably called forward, was received with loud cries of "*Uvolnaim! uvolnaim!*" (He may go about his business!) The election, by ballot, was then proceeded with, and the choice of those present fell on General Rakhmanoff, who had about 150 out of 200 votes. This announcement was received with tremendous applause, though the general himself was not present.

I mention these little matters to show that the deputies at these Russian assemblies of nobles are by no means so cold and indifferent in their proceedings as we are apt to imagine. Their votes, it is true, must all be confirmed by the government before they are valid, but in the assembly itself no government officer has a seat, and sometimes the assembly has endeavoured to maintain its decisions, even in opposition to the government. On one occasion the opposition of the Ukraine nobles went so far, that it excited the anger of the authorities at St. Petersburg, and there was some question of striking the Ukraine out of the list of governments.

Sometimes the scenes at these Ukrainian *Vuibors* have been somewhat too animated. Formerly, every nobleman of the Ukraine, whether he was rich or poor, had a right to appear there; but several years ago a ukase was issued, by which the right was confined to those nobles who were the owners of not less than a hundred "souls." Soon after the publica-

tion, a nobleman not possessed of the legal number of serfs made his appearance in the *vuibor*. A young wealthy noble insisted upon the immediate withdrawal of the intruder, who, turning on his enemy exclaimed, "Thou art right; I have not a hundred souls; but I have one soul worth a thousand of thine!" and with these words stabbed him to the heart.

In no provincial city of Russia is there better society than at Kharkoff, where a great deal has been done for the cause of public education, though private schools receive but little encouragement from the government. The seminary of Kharkoff, for the education of young men intended for the church, enjoys a high reputation in Russia. As to the university, when the cost and labour expended on it are compared to the fruits which the institution has really borne, the old story of the mountain in labour is but too apt to suggest itself. About 30 years ago, the university had an interval of brightness, in consequence of a number of distinguished men who had been invited from abroad. The rudeness of the climate, or some other cause, led them, however, in a short time to resign their places, and return to where they had come from. One only, Professor N., of Leipzig, an eminent philologist, remained; but he was soon found to be quite too learned for the place; so they did for him what his colleagues had done for themselves,—they dismissed him. His Latin and Greek availed him but little; his wife, however, set up as a milliner, and they live both very comfortably upon the profits of her trade.

The buildings belonging to the university are large and imposing, much more so than those of many a similar institution of wide-extended fame in Germany; but there was nothing deserving of particular attention, either in the library, the printing establishments, or in the various museums. The greatest curiosity about the place was an old soldier, who acted as our *cicerone*, and showed us the zoological collection. We expressed our astonishment at the wretched way in which the specimens had been stuffed. "Ay, *batiushka*," he exclaimed, "how could I do it better? I never saw one of the creatures in my life, and had nothing to go by but the professor's pictures." Our contempt for the eagles, wolves, and cats immediately gave way to admiration, when we learned who the artist had been; for so untaught a genius, the figures were good enough.

The German Lutheran church at Kharkoff is an elegant building, though it smacks somewhat of the ecclesiastical architecture of Russia. This church was erected by the late incumbent at an expense of 80,000 rubles, which he had eloquence and influence enough to prevail upon his flock to subscribe. This reverend gentleman, who now reposes in the cemetery annexed to the church over which he once presided, was a man possessed of considerable property; he was respected by the rich on account of his knowledge of the world; by the poor for his benevolence, and by the whole congregation for the impressiveness of his oratory. He had completed his fiftieth year before the idea ever occurred to him of devoting himself to the pastoral office, and his previous occupations, one would think, were little calculated to prepare him for the sacred mission to which he afterwards devoted himself with so much zeal and success.

He was born at Prague, of humble parents, and married early in life, having obtained an appointment as assistant scene-painter at a theatre. He was wretchedly poor, occupying only one room with his whole family, whose common couch was generally composed of a few trusses of straw. At a subsequent period of his life, when his son was settled at Moscow as



a man of fortune, the old clergyman would often tell of the shifts to which he had been obliged to have recourse, to obtain a crust of bread and a few rags of clothes for that very son. He afterwards obtained an appointment as scene-painter at Brussels; but, during the French revolution, he was denounced as an Austrian, and forced to quit the country. The little money he had, he then invested in a *pacotille* of perfumery, and embarked for St. Petersburg. In the Russian capital he established a little shop of cosmetics, and through the interest of some of his customers, obtained an engagement at the theatre. With the usual rapidity with which dexterous foreigners get on in this country, he rose to the office of inspector of the imperial theatre, and was in a fair way to fortune, when the theatre under his inspection was unfortunately burnt down. As it is a Russian principle, that an inspector must be answerable with his purse and person for any misfortune that may happen to any thing confided to him, and as the master of police chanced to be a very severe man, our poor inspector was already thinking of making up his bundle for a trip to Siberia. He was agreeably disappointed. None of the blame was laid on him, and a new theatre was ordered to be built immediately. Nevertheless, he began to think that a fancy warehouse at Moscow might bring; in more than he could earn as theatrical manager at St. Petersburg, so he started for the ancient capital, where, with his savings on the banks of the Neva, he soon stocked a shop with toys and millinery wares.

The burning of Moscow in 1812 ruined him again, but in a fortnight afterwards laid the foundation of his fortune. Bankrupt as he was, a little ready money remained in his hands, and this he employed by buying up the Russian bank-notes from the French soldiers. This was a profitable trade, in which his capital could be rapidly turned; and some successful speculations in which he afterwards engaged, soon made him a very wealthy man.

He now began to take an active part in matters of a more public character. He became president of the freemasons' lodge at Moscow, and instituted an association to alleviate the condition of those who were banished to Siberia. These occupations afforded him an opportunity for the display of his eloquence, a gift, the existence of which he had not perhaps himself been conscious of; and such was the delight he took in the exercise of his newly-discovered powers, that at the age of fifty he determined to look out for a situation as preacher. He prepared himself for his new office with great diligence, and having passed his examination before the Consistory, he was shortly afterwards appointed to the Lutheran church at Kharkoff, where he devoted himself for the rest of his life, with great zeal, to the spiritual interests of his congregation. His salary he gave to the poor, and moreover, he built a school and parsonage at his own expense. His career had been a variegated one. He had seen life under every variety of form, and had learned, by personal experience, to judge correctly of the sufferings of poverty. In society he was cheerful and gentle; in the pulpit his zeal sometimes bordered on intemperance. So zealous indeed was he, that even sickness could not keep him from his church on a Sunday. More than once he quitted his bed to ascend the pulpit, and at the conclusion of the service had to be carried home again to his bed. Yet he never prepared a sermon, but trusted always to the inspiration of the moment. Indeed, he would sometimes say, that his flock was composed of such fluctuating materials, that he never knew before-

hand how his congregation would be made up, and he held it to be the duty of a clergyman to suit his sermon as much as possible to the auditory he had to address.

His death was as easy as his life had been marked with activity and zeal. He was sitting one Sunday at his writing-table, where he had just concluded a letter to his son with these words: "So much, my dear boy, for to-day; I shall write to you again next post, if I should not die before then." He rose from his seat to proceed to his church, but turned suddenly to his daughter and said, "Child, I must stay at home. My strength fails me. The hand of the angel of death is upon me." A physician was immediately sent for, the daughter was fervent in her prayers, but before night the good man breathed his last, with perfect resignation, and full of confidence in his God.

#### THE WINTER FAIR AT KHARKOFF.

The fairs of Russia, both in their origin and signification, differ materially from those of Germany. The latter originated chiefly in privileges granted during the middle ages at certain seasons to certain towns. In the interior of Russia commercial privileges and corporation rights were never known, and the congregating of merchants upon particular spots was the result of accident rather than design. Pilgrimages on certain holidays to the graves of saints, or to some religious picture of more than ordinary sanctity, had the natural consequence of drawing large numbers together, and merchants were induced, by the hope of gain, to attach themselves to the pious multitude, till at last a fair organized itself, and growing more and more important every year, led at last to an entire oblivion of its original cause. Such was the origin of the fairs of Romni, Makarieff, Kursk, Kharkoff, &c.

The most ancient and celebrated of all the Russian fairs is that of Novgorod, or, as it is still called by the Russian merchants, the "Makarieff fair," after the name of the place where it originated. The next in importance, till very lately, was that of the Root Desert, held near Kursk, in whose vicinity a miraculous picture of the Virgin was said to have been discovered in 1300, on the root of a tree, where, in consequence, a hermitage and a convent were erected, and where afterwards a yearly pilgrimage led to the organisation of a yearly fair. The number of strangers at Kursk is still greater than at any other fair, except that of Novgorod, but with respect to the business transacted there, the fair of Romni has of late years equalled, and that of Kharkoff has surpassed the fair of Kursk. For Siberia, the most important fair is that of Irbit.

Considering the business transacted at these five fairs, their relative importance might be expressed thus: Irbit = 1; Romni =  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ; Kursk = 2; Kharkoff = 3; and Novgorod = 8. At Novgorod, in four weeks, goods to the amount of 120,000,000 rubles will sometimes change hands.

Like all the fairs of Little Russia, the Kharkoff fair opens with the sale of horses, that arrive in great numbers from the taboos of the steppe, from the studs of the crown and of the rich nobles, and from the Cossack settlements about the Black Sea and the Caucasus. Most of these animals are of an ordinary description, and are sold at very low prices; but there are

always a few specimens of superior beauty, for which from two to ten thousand rubles are demanded. Nay, at one inn, while I was there, a merchant had hired a private room for the express use of his horse, which he treated with much greater care than he did his own person, feeling perhaps how worthless an individual he was himself, in comparison with a steed which he hoped to dispose of for no less than 18,000 rubles, a sum, by-the-by, for which, at the same fair, he might have purchased a whole taboon of 300 gallopers. There were said to be 6000 horses at the fair. Most of them were bought for the north of Russia, but some also for Poland, Austria, and Moldavia.

About the end of December the horses have been disposed of, and things begin to assume an appearance of briskness within the town, for the horse fair is held in the suburbs. Strange merchants are seen to arrive, and freely to distribute alms, by way of securing the goodwill of the saints. Bokharians and Persians in their silken vestments, portly Armenians, war-like Circassians, together with Poles and Cossacks, are seen lounging about the streets, for the more distant traders are always those who arrive first.

The business done at the fair is all wholesale, and therefore few but merchants trouble themselves about it. The nobility of the neighbouring provinces show themselves but rarely at Kharkoff during the fair, and to this it may be owing that so vast a confluence leads to the opening of no extraordinary places of amusement, such as theatres, concerts, &c. The Russian merchant knows, in point of fact, but of two amusements,—making money, and drinking tea. All the day long he chaffers, and in the evening his favourite recreation is to promote perspiration by copious libations of tea.

The houses of public entertainment, numerous as they are, are all crowded, as may well be supposed, when it is remembered, that independently of the merchants themselves, some 15,000 drivers, and perhaps 80,000 horses, have been required to convey the various articles of merchandise in sledges to the fair, and will afterwards be put in requisition to convey the purchased commodities to their several places of destination.

The *gostinnoi dvor* and the customary market-places are, of course, insufficient to accommodate all the wares that come pouring in. There are buildings in the town that have been erected on speculation, merely with a view to their being occupied during the fair time. Even the churches and convents seek to take advantage of so favourable an opportunity, by erecting, on such waste ground as they may have at their disposal, booths, either of a temporary or of a permanent character. One man, a merchant of the name of Karpoff, has erected a bazaar, which is said to bring him in during the fair time a rent of 50,000 rubles. Many of the inhabitants also vacate the greater part of their houses, and are handsomely remunerated by the merchants for the temporary accommodation.

Manufactured goods of cotton, silk, and wool, and furs of every description, form the staple commodities. Some of the merchants assured me they had brought cotton goods to the value of 400,000 or 500,000 rubles to the fair. The smallest dealers in this article boasted of having a capital with them worth 40,000 or 50,000 rubles, and though they were certainly not called on to make a full and true confession to a stranger,



yet their several accounts agreed so well, that I am disposed to believe they spoke the truth. The plain *kitaika* (calico), was the principal article, and was bought in large quantities by the oriental dealers.

The furs brought to Kharkoff were not of the finest descriptions, for which St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Nishney Novgorod are more favourable markets, nevertheless the fur-booths were to me among the most attractive and interesting objects at the fair. There were ten merchants who dealt in the finer descriptions, and numbers came with the skins of wolves, sheep, and hares, for the supply of the common people. These booths were all fitted up in the most tasteful manner; the skins were hung about the walls with an evident view to effect, and a couple of wolves or polar bears were usually stationed as sentinels at the door, to do that dead which they little dreamt of doing when alive, namely, to invite the stranger to enter their dens.

The greatest of all the fur-dealers at the fair was the merchant Shelikoff, who with a few other Moscovites, forms the great American Fur Company. Into the warehouses of this man the wild beasts enter fairly in herds. Nearly a fourth of all the animals killed by the Siberian and Sitka hunters is brought to his various depots at Novgorod, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Riga, Odessa, and Kharkoff. It is fortunate for him that the ghosts of the bears and wild cats are less tenacious about the posthumous disposal of their hides than some of the heroes of tradition are supposed to have been. Shelikoff assured me he had brought 600,000 rubles' worth of skins to the Kharkoff fair. In one small box alone, he showed me a few black fox skins, which he estimated at 30,000 rubles; the least valuable of these skins were worth 2000, and for some he asked as much as 5000 rubles. Furs in Russia are examined and valued with the same minute care as diamonds are with us; and a skin which unites all the sought for qualities, rises sometimes to a most enormous price. Every now and then you hear of a bear or a fox that has been shot, whose skin is declared to be above all value. The lightness of the hide, the colour, and gloss of the fur, the age of the animal, the season in which it has been killed, the length of the hair, the condition of the under wool, these, and various other points, are all most carefully investigated. Some of the beasts killed in the Siberian forests must be shot only with blunt pieces of wood, others must be caught in traps, and others again are comparatively valueless if struck in any but a particular part of the body.

#### THE MONEY-CHANGERS.

At no time was the coinage of Russia in a very satisfactory condition. Before the sovereigns of the country took to coining, different descriptions of foreign money obtained a currency, and some have maintained their ground ever since. Among these are the Spanish dollar, the Dutch ducat, and a few others. Of some of the conquered provinces, again, the current coins have spread themselves over the whole empire. In this way the German coins came in through Livonia and Courland, the Swedish through Finland, and the Polish, Arabian, and Turkish, through Kasan, Astrakhan, and the Crimea.

Since the time of Peter the Great, Russia has been coining away very diligently for herself; at first, copper and silver, then gold, and lately platina; but as each sovereign coined, in a great measure, according to his

own liking, the ruble of one reign is found to vary very materially from that of another. Since Catherine's time, bank certificates have also been issued, whose nominal value was at first the same as that of the metallic sums represented, but gradually the paper money sunk in estimation to one-half, afterwards to one-third, and in the end to little more than one-fourth of the same amount in silver. Lately, by an imperial ukase, the value of paper as compared with silver has been fixed at 1: 3 60/100, so that a silver ruble is declared to be equal in value to three rubles and sixty copeks in paper. The paper ruble (worth about 10½*d.* English) was adopted for all general calculations; but in addition to this, there was established at Moscow, and at several points in the south of Russia, the ruble currency, of which forty-three are equal to forty paper rubles.

With such a complicated system, the profession of a money-changer has become an indispensable one in every Russian town; and at the fairs of Novgorod and Kharkoff, these miniature banks are numberless. They are to be found, however, even in the smallest cities. In Poltova, for instance, a town of 8000 inhabitants, there are more than fifty money-changers. These people carry on their commerce in the open market-place, where their bank-notes, and their little piles of gold, silver, and copper coins are set out in the most attractive manner. In the usual style of the Russian merchant, the changer invites the passer-by to stop and change his money, well aware, from experience, how often all men are embarrassed by the money they carry about them. During the bustle of the fair, business to the amount of some hundred thousand rubles will often be done in one day at one of these tables; yet the banker keeps no books, has no other counting-house than his table, and makes all his calculations by the aid of his *tshotki*, or reckoning-board, slipping the beads up and down the brass chords of his stringed instrument with astonishing rapidity, and often solving the most intricate questions with the greatest apparent facility. To give some idea of the complicated nature of his transactions, I will describe some of the current and ideal coinages in which it is his custom to deal.

The paper ruble is a fictitious coin, and stands, as has already been said, in proportion to the silver ruble as 1 to 3 60/100. Ten silver rubles are worth nine Prussian dollars. (A silver ruble is worth about 3*s.* 1½*d.* sterling). There are bank-notes of 500, 200, 100, 50, 25, 10, and 5 rubles, but none higher than 500 or less than 5. The five ruble notes are blue, the ten ruble notes red, and all the others are white. No description of money is seen more frequently in Russia than these blue and red notes; in St. Petersburg, indeed, and throughout the north, almost all payments are made in paper. The ruble currency which prevails in Moscow and the south occasions immense confusion and trouble, as all small silver coins are struck with reference to the paper ruble, of which forty are equal to forty-three rubles currency.

Gold coins are even now but rarely seen. They are more current in the south than in the north, and more in Poland than in Russia. The *imperial* is worth forty paper rubles, and in the south forty-three rubles. The next in value is the *poluimperial*, or half-imperial, which passes for twenty rubles. The Dutch ducat is called *tshervonets*, and sometimes *gollandski*. The French twenty-franc pieces (Napoleons) are also met with. The Russians call them *lobandshiks*, from *lob*, the forehead, on account of the high forehead usually given to Napoleon on these coins.

Platina money has been coined of late years, but is rarely found in circu-

lation, though in the north more than in the south. There are pieces of twelve and others of six rubles.

The silver coin most current throughout Russia is the ruble, so called from the word *rubit*, to hew off, because in former times silver was current only in bars, from which it was customary for a debtor to strike off with a hammer and chisel the amount which he had to pay. The silver ruble is carefully distinguished by merchants into old and new rubles, the former being always worth twenty or thirty copeks more than the latter. In South Russia, the silver ruble passes for four rubles.

The *poltnik*, or half-ruble, is equal to about two paper rubles, and the *tshetvertak*, or quarter, to one ruble.

The silver ruble contains 100 silver copeks, but no such coin really exists, either as a coinage or in the customary calculations. Of all silver coins smaller than the *tshetvertak*, the value is calculated in paper copeks, of which a hundred go to the paper ruble. Thus there is the *vosmigrivnik*, which is worth eighty copeks, or ninety-two copeks currency; the *shestigrivnik*, worth sixty copeks, or sixty-nine copeks currency; and the *grivnik*, worth forty copeks, or forty-six copeks currency. These small silver coins are far from being so abundant as they ought to be, and it is partly to the scarcity of small silver coins that the money-changers are indebted for so much business.

This scarcity of small silver coins has tended to keep the Polish coins so much in circulation. These are the three-florin piece (*tri slotikh*), which is worth one ruble and eighty copeks; the *dwa slotikh*, worth one ruble and twenty copeks; and the *slot*, worth sixty copeks.

In the south of Russia, the Spanish dollar is also frequently found in circulation, passing generally for six rubles currency.

Of copper-money there is, perhaps, more in Russia than in any other country in the world. The largest is the *grivna*, worth 10 copeks. Then comes the *piatak* = 5 copeks, the *grosh* = 2 copeks, the *kopaika* = 1 copek, the *denga* =  $\frac{1}{2}$  copek, and the *polushka* =  $\frac{1}{4}$  copek. These half and quarter copeks were formerly very current, but are never seen now, and even the *kopaika* is but rarely met with.

#### COUNTRY LIFE IN THE UKRAINE.

While at Kharkoff, I was invited by a Russian family of distinction to spend a few days of the spring at Dikanka, an estate formerly belonging to the Kotshubey family, and I was delighted to have this opportunity of observing, at my leisure, a little of the rural life of this part of the great Russian empire.

The weather was fine when we set off, and continued so till we arrived at Valki, where we spent the night. The next morning, shortly after we had started, the rain began to fall heavily, and the roads became so deep, that I began to think seriously of reinforcing our six horses, by yoking four oxen before them, a kind of auxiliary to which it is often necessary to have recourse in Little Russia. However, towards dusk we contrived to get to Dikanka, where we entered by a triumphal arch, erected some years ago by Prince Kotshubey, on the occasion of a visit paid him by the Emperor Alexander.

The Slavonian divinity Radegast (literally, the cheerer of guests) reigns



yet triumphantly in. the palace of the Russian noble, as in the cottage of the peasant. We found a whole population of guests assembled at Dikanka. The relations of the family had gathered together from all parts of the country, and peopled a whole row of guest houses, that had been erected close to the main building. The family itself consisted of the noblest among the noble, the kindest among the kind. The chief held his place among the highest and wisest men of the empire; the hostess was one of the first, and certainly of the most amiable ladies of St. Petersburg. Their daughter, now, alas, no more, was one of the most beautiful, and most accomplished of her age and sex, in Russia; while the junior members of the family formed as pretty a little group of angels and cupids, as it has ever been my fortune to meet with. In short, we found, in every sense of the word, a most delightful circle assembled at Dikanka; so much so, that we were easily persuaded to postpone our departure till the days had grown into weeks, and the weeks into months. People on this side of the Oder, have very little notion of how very agreeably life may be spent on the other side of the Dnieper, by those who know how to reconcile themselves to the foreign element in which they must move.

In ancient times the possessor of such a noble residence as Dikanka, would have been a tolerably independent prince. He would have had a number of armed men in his service, ready to mount and follow him on a foray into Tartary or Turkey, or to back him at a contested election for the office of *hetman*. The days of the Cossack republic are not very remote, for even after its subjection by Russia, the country retained much of its ancient institutions, and it was only in the reign of Catherine, that these were assimilated to the institutions of the rest of the empire.

In the lumber-rooms of many a country-seat of Little Russia may yet be seen the weapons with which the warriors of the olden time were wont to arm themselves when they sailed down the Dnieper on their predatory excursions along the Turkish coast. For the last century, these things have happily been consigned to the lumber-rooms; the Cossacks have been metamorphosed into well-drilled soldiers, their bearded chiefs into smart officers, and their piratical vessels are replaced by the men-of-war and frigates that have given to Russia the undisputed sway of the Black Sea.

The houses, likewise, have changed their outward form, and have assumed, for the most part, that half-Italian look given to them by the profusion of pillars, in which modern Russian architecture delights so much. The armed bands which formerly constituted the magnificence of a Cossack chateau, have now been changed into bands of musicians, for Little Russia is the very land of music and song. A nobleman will often send for a music-master from St. Petersburg, by whose aid a corps of lackeys is metamorphosed in a short time into a regular orchestra of fiddlers, hornists, &c.

#### A PEASANT WEDDING IN THE UKRAINE.

We had not been long enjoying the hospitalities of Dikanka, when an opportunity was afforded us of witnessing a Malorossian\* wedding. One

\* The natives of Little Russia are called *Malorossiani*; those of Great Russia call themselves *Ruski*, or Russian *par excellence*. These are the two principal sections into which the Russian nation is usually divided; but when the emperor is called the

day a mute embarrassed pair—a *klopza* (peasant lad) in a spick-and-span new *sirak* and *torba*, and a young *tshornoi gus* (a black goose, *alias* a stork) as the girls of Little Russia are frequently called, on account of the constant predominance of black and white in their costume—were announced at the castle. According to the Malorossian custom,\* they fell on their knees, kissed the hands and feet of their lord and lady, requested leave to marry, and invited the whole household to the wedding. The permission was readily accorded, and a proposal was made to the bride and bridegroom, to celebrate their wedding at the castle, in which case they were promised a banquet sufficiently copious for the entertainment of the whole village.

On the following day, accordingly, one-half of the lawn was covered with tables and benches, while the other half was arranged for dancing on. Towards noon the noise of an approaching multitude announced the bridal procession. All the inmates of the chateau mustered under the portico in front of the house to view the merry train. The musicians marched at the head of the party, followed by the *matîre de plaisir*, decorated, according to the prescribed rule, with handkerchiefs tied cross-wise over his shoulders. This is an official personage, whose presence is *de rigueur* at every Malorossian wedding, where he doubles the parts of merry-andrew and cup-bearer. He was followed by the father and mother of

emperor of all the Russias, the Russian includes likewise, White Russia, comprising a great part of Lithuania, on the Upper Dwina and the sources of the Niemen; Red Russia, of which a large portion at present does homage to the Austrian sceptre; and Black Russia, the exact locality of which it is difficult to define. The *Ruski*, or Great Russians, inhabit the central provinces of the empire, the ancient Muscovy, whence they have extended themselves over the lands inhabited by the Finns, to the Baltic and the Arctic Ocean, and among the Tartars and Mongolians, over Siberia, as far as the Pacific. In numbers they are supposed to be about twenty-eight millions, and constitute, therefore, by far the most important portion of the sixty millions of human beings ruled by the Russian emperor. They are to all intents the ruling race in Russia, occupy the most important offices, and their language is the official language of the state. The *Malorossiani* inhabit the southern part of European Russia, particularly the provinces watered by the Dnieper and its tributaries. The Malorossiani are almost exclusively an agricultural people, and have spread themselves over the country reaching from the Carpathian mountains to the Lower Volga. The Cossacks on the Euxine and the Aral, the Caucasus and the Ural, the Don and the Volga, are all descended from military colonies originating among the Malorossiani. The whole race comprises about twelve millions of souls. The natives of Great and those of little Russia differ as much as it is possible for two parts of the same nation to do. They differ from each other morally and physically, and in many points there exists a remarkable contrast between their habits and characters.

\* The serfs in Little Russia are much more obsequious to their lords than are the serfs of Great Russia. Serfdom, in fact, is an institution of much more ancient date in Great Russia than in Little Russia, where it is said never to have existed till after the subjugation of the country by the Moscovites. The serf in Great Russia calls his lord "father," treats him with a respectful familiarity, and stands to him in something of a patriarchal relation. He is generally well informed of the family affairs of his lord, takes a lively interest in them, and will not hesitate to volunteer good advice where he thinks it called for. In little Russia, on the contrary, the serf neither loves his lord nor troubles himself about his concerns. The most romantic attachment is often shown in Great Russia by the serfs to their lords; in little Russia, the murder of a lord by his serf is by no means an unheard of occurrence. Nevertheless, the serf of Little Russia is much more humble and submissive in his outward deportment, endeavouring, apparently, by an obsequious demeanour, to atone for the total absence of real affection. On these points there is much resemblance between the serfs of Little Russia and those of Poland.

the bride, and they again by the bride and bridegroom, decorated with such a profusion of pinks, lilies, asters, and other flowers, that they looked almost like a pair of walking nosegays. The whole party came on with a tripping, half-dancing step, all except the two principal personages in the show, who were blushing, embarrassed, and half melancholy, and, on arriving in front of the portico, bowed so low, that their heads almost touched the ground.

After the bridegroom came a pretty girl, led by a couple of *khlopzi*. In her hand she carried a sabre thrust through a large loaf of bread. This symbol of connubial life is never absent from a wedding in Little Russia. We were not told the meaning of the custom, yet we had no difficulty in explaining it to ourselves. It was a warning, in the olden time, to the bridegroom that he had undertaken to defend his bride, and furnish her with bread. At the wedding here described the sabre was only of wood; before the days of serfdom, I have no doubt, it was of polished iron.

The wedding guests followed festively arrayed in their national costumes. They drew up in front of the balcony, where we all, one after the other, drank to the happiness of the bridal pair, who in their turn drank all our very good healths, in doing which the poor girl manifested much feeling, and more than once allowed tears to escape her.

Our guests then seated themselves to their dinner, at which there could not be less than a thousand persons. A little altar, covered with white cloth, had been erected, on which were laid pictures of saints, and other ecclesiastical paraphernalia. The Russians can enter upon nothing without a priestly benediction, not even upon a festive carouse. A whole chorus of priests came forward, chanting hymns and swinging their censers, and praying for a blessing on the munificent lord of the chateau, and on all present.

During the whole day an ox had been roasting before the fire, and cabbage-soup and peas had been preparing in enormous boilers. Half-a-dozen casks of spirit, mead, and beer had been placed on the lawn, and by the aid of these and other good things, every remnant of seriousness was soon banished. For us, dinner had been prepared within the chateau, where we were entertained by a party of travelling Tyrolese singers, whose delicious Alpine melodies threw a temporary melancholy over those among us who were natives of Germany. These wandering minstrels are frequently met with in Russia, and even in remote parts of Siberia, where their musical abilities are far more richly remunerated than in their native land.

On our return to the lawn we found the wedding guests as merry as need be. They were broken up into various groups, and the cymbals, tamarines, and fiddles were all hard at work, accompanying their national dances. The favourite dance in Little Russia is the *kasatsha*. One pair only dance at the same time. The dancer, after having selected his partner, seeks to allure her by a number of seductive graces into the circle formed by the spectators, and when at last the lady has allowed herself to be prevailed on to begin, it is some time before she shows any signs of weariness. Her gestures are of course less rapid and expressive than her partner's, but she also sometimes indulges in the toss of the head and the shrugging of the shoulders, so characteristic of the Russian dance, even while she affects to avoid the amorous swain, and to repulse him with her hands.

A Russian does not dance merely with his legs and his feet, though he



evidently entertains no small regard for those members of his political body, often glancing at them most affectionately while he dances, and throwing open his sheepskin coat, that he may admire their paces the more conveniently; but they are far from having the dance all to themselves, his head, hands, and arms being likewise in continual motion, whenever he wishes to heighten the expression of his pantomime. Not only every feature of his countenance, but every muscle of his body, is kept in play. The meaning of the *kasatsha* is this: an amorous swain makes all sorts of gestures and postures to please his mistress, and seems at turns in rapture and in despair; his prudish partner is at first unmoved by all his solicitations, but gradually she softens, and the dance ends with an embrace and a kiss. One couple played their parts so admirably that they drew down the warmest applause, and excited the gaiety of all present.

The spectators are not mere lookers-on on these occasions, but show a lively interest in the progress of the dance, criticise the performers without the least reserve, and frequently enliven their evolutions with a vocal accompaniment. On these occasions a constant fire of *bons mots* is often kept up. Towards the end of our festivity, when the hilarity of the company was becoming more and more unrestrained, even the beggars, who had been attracted by the sounds of merriment, began to muster courage, and mingle in the dance. One of them, who was many degrees removed from sobriety, a dirty rogue, with every mark of the vagabond upon him, from his tattered hat down to the torn remnants of his boots, was received with an obstreperous chorus of laughter when he entered the circle to display his abilities on the light fantastic toe. Nothing daunted by such a reception, nor by the incessant banterings of an admiring crowd, he went gaily through his evolutions, and seemed to enjoy the fun quite as much as though it had not been raised at his own expense.

The prettiest Russian dance, however, is the *vesnänka*, which can only be danced in the open air. A party of young girls join hands, and trip it away from one end of the village to the other, unaccompanied by any other music than their own voices. One girl acts as leader, determines the ever-varying figure of the dance, and is closely followed by her companions. Now the train advances in a straight line; now it winds into a multitude of intricate mazes; and now again the merry party unravel the knot into which they have so ingeniously wound themselves, or, joining hands, form a merry circle, moving rapidly round without stirring from the spot. The *vesnänka* never fails to put life into the whole village. The old people come into the streets to rejoice in the sprightly movements of their daughters; the children muster speedily to form their own *vesnänka*, and the young men are not slow in making up similar parties of their own. Sooner or later it mostly happens that the two sexes join hands, and then the merriment grows fast and furious. The perseverance of the dancers on these occasions is wonderful: when such a dance has once begun it mostly lasts till the end of the day.

Nor were our guests deficient in perseverance. The gay scene was prolonged till a late hour of the night, when the party formed again into procession to return to their village, where they purposed to renew their merrymaking, for no Malorossian considers that less than four days ought to be devoted to a feast that is to exercise so lasting an influence over the remainder of his life.

## VILLAGES IN THE UKRAINE.

Immediately beyond our garden was an old Malorossian village, that bore the same name as the chateau (Dikanka), and a little farther on lay another called Budushtshi. To these two villages I frequently directed my walks, for the purpose of studying the manners of the people, particularly to Budushtshi, which was considerably larger than the other, and was, moreover, not without some historical interest, for it was under the roof of one of its houses that Charles XII. slept on the night before the battle of Poltova. These villages in Little Russia are mostly imbedded in a ravine, and extend generally over a large space of ground, containing sometimes as many as five or six thousand inhabitants, and seldom less than two thousand. In the centre of the village, on an elevation, stands, usually, the church; and sometimes, when the village happens to be a large one, there are as many as five or six churches, and these are generally placed so as to produce a pretty picturesque effect. The houses lie scattered about, concealed by a luxuriant foliage, or by the yet more luxuriant weeds, which rise in surprising abundance from the steppe, wherever its soil has been disturbed by the plough or the spade. Without the village, on the plateau of the steppe, are grouped the windmills, of which there are usually from fifty to one hundred, and the whole produces a most pleasing effect when a traveller arrives at the edge of one of these ravines, and looks down from the elevated steppe into the snug little world of a Malorossian village.

The population varies probably as much as the appearance of the village. It consists usually of serfs (*panskiye liudi*), of free peasants (*kasakki*), of priests, and of nobles. The free peasants and the serfs always keep carefully aloof from each other, usually occupy the opposite portions of a village, rarely intermarry, and differ from each other both in manner and appearance. The *panskiye liudi* pride themselves on the power and wealth of their lords—the *kasakki* on their own independence. Among the latter will generally be found, not only the wealthiest inhabitants of the village, but likewise all the beggars. This is natural enough. If a free peasant be a drunkard, as most of them are, he is likely to sink into abject poverty; and having no lord on whose bounty he can fall back, his only reliance must be on the alms of the benevolent; if, on the other hand, he be a careful, industrious man, he will be likely to accumulate property, without being liable to the extortions of a lord.

Of priests there is rarely a dearth, one village often containing from twenty to thirty. They live with the peasants, and adopt their manners to a great extent. In the same way the petty nobles, of whom there are often hundreds in one village, live with the peasants, though not without valuing themselves amazingly upon their superior birth. In general, some family or other has in course of time established a sort of pre-eminence over the rest; has acquired sundry square miles of land in the neighbourhood, and owns its thousands of serfs, or *souls*, as they are more commonly called, while other families can command the services of only a hundred or two, or perhaps have only two souls besides their own to dispose of, and not perhaps as much as one square foot of land. These small soul owners will then be found occupying the posts of doctors and stewards in the village, or will sometimes even be found as menial servants in the houses of wealthier

individuals of their own class. As servants they are generally submissive enough, but the pride of birth is not extinguished in them on that account, and they will not fail from time to time to assume the magnifico, and striking their breasts with their hands, they will then haughtily exclaim, "*Ya dvoryanin!*" (I am a noble!)

Those of the petty nobles who are possessed of a little property, with the exception of those who enter the civil or military service of the crown, live generally among the peasantry. To describe the various gradations of wealth and civilization among them would be an endless task. They vary quite as much in character and occupation, as in the number of the *souls* over which they have a right to command. Some among them will build themselves fine houses with a profusion of pillars, some will surround their houses with neat plantations; others, like good old patriarchs, tend their flocks of fat-tailed Walachian sheep, and others again breed Merinos, and endeavour to keep progress with the "march of improvement." Most of them, however, live in neat clean houses, few are without horses and equipage, and all are made supremely happy by the visit of a stranger.

The houses of the humblest peasants have a clean and cheerful look; indeed, there is nothing in which the Malorossian distinguishes himself more agreeably from the native of Great Russia, than by his superior cleanliness. The houses are constantly whitewashed, and look at a distance like linen put out to bleach. The materials of these cottages are not indeed very substantial, consisting seldom of more than a framework of reeds or branches covered with clay. Even the chimney is of a similar construction. The expense of such a little tenement is trifling enough, varying from twenty to fifty dollars (from about four to nine pounds English), but a stranger would little imagine what a comfortable little nest can be had in the Ukraine at that price. When such a house burns down, the loss is not very great, and in about a fortnight it can be built up again with ease. Many parts, indeed, are kept ready for sale in the bazaar, such as the frame of the roof, windows and window-frames, &c.

From what I have already said, it must be evident that the villages of Little Russia are in reality of more importance than its towns. Nine-tenths of the population, and considerably more than half the priesthood and nobility, inhabit the villages. Let us then stroll together through one of these villages, and we will choose a fine evening in spring for our walk, that we may examine at leisure all the little peculiarities of the place.

At first we come to the fields immediately around the village. These are covered with rye, wheat, Indian corn, and barley, but thistles of a tree-like altitude, and a variety of other luxuriant weeds, spring out from among the corn, for there are few farmers here who manifest their love of order by the tidiness of their cornfields. Next, we arrive at the little army of village windmills, of which there are sometimes as many as a hundred close together, with the millers and their men plying busily among them. Not far from the mills is generally the common pasturage, on which seldom less than a hundred oxen may be seen ruminating and masticating together. Some forty or fifty light waggons laden with merchandise are neatly grouped around, while their drivers are actively engaged collecting dry weeds and dung, for the purpose of kindling a fire. This field has been hospitably set aside by the village for the accommodation of travellers, each of whom is at liberty to drive his cattle into it. Should the village happen to lie near a main road, an evening will rarely pass over



without the arrival of one or two caravans, to avail themselves of so considerate an arrangement. Among the guests there will generally be found a group of itinerant gipsies, who travel from village to village during the summer, and are the chief smiths, sievemakers, and horse-dealers of Little Russia. During winter, these people hide themselves in underground holes, in the suburb of some town, where they are registered by the police. The invariable accompaniment to every gipsy tent, is a couple of light waggons, that serve the whole party at night for beds. The steps of these waggons are let down to supply the want of chairs and ottomans, and over them the smoky picture of some saint or idol is sure to be suspended. The mother of the family, with a pipe in her mouth, superintends the domestic economy of the little household; that is to say, she bangs the children about, and drives the dogs from the kettle. A young girl, as slender as a birch-tree, as lovely a figure as you could wish for the part of Preciosa, but with a pipe projecting from between her lips, may be seen fetching water from the nearest well. The master of the tent, likewise smoking, is plying his trade as a smith in front of his ambulatory home; a Russian peasant stands looking on; the horses of the little colony are grazing around, and another gipsy is seen coming from the village, laden with invalided kettles and other time-worn specimens of metallic industry, that demand the repairing hand of the experienced Vulcan, and bearing at the same time a little cargo of cast-off habiliments, broken victuals, bones, and perhaps a hedgehog, the cherished delicacy of every gipsy gourmand.

We now enter the village itself. At the entrance, right and left, are two posts with various statistical notices relative to the population of the place, the number of its houses, &c. A few inequalities in the surface, though now, perhaps, overgrown with grass, mark the place where formerly stood a saltpetre manufactory, for the soil of the steppes of the Ukraine is so full of saltpetre, that its collection forms one of the standing occupations of the country-people. Some peasant carts, drawn by oxen, enter the village with us, but at so leisurely a pace, one might suppose. Time, for them, had leaden weights, and not wings, to his feet. A group of Malorossian women follow. They have just returned from haymaking, and have decorated themselves most profusely with wreaths and garlands of flowers. They march two and two like a company of soldiers, and are singing so loud and joyously, one might take them for a troop of Amazons returning in triumph from some recent victory. Other groups of vocalists, meanwhile, may be more faintly heard arriving from the opposite side of the village.

The whitewashed cottages are ranged on either side, but are almost concealed by a luxuriant growth of thistles and other weeds. Each little farm is environed by a close hedge of thorns, intended as a barrier against the encroachments of the wolf. From each door rush forth a pack of barking hounds, of whom there is a greater abundance in the villages, than there is of wolves in the open country, and that is not saying a little. Every village in Little Russia may match Constantinople itself for the density of its canine population; but the curs are little cared for, and are left to bark and howl and cater for themselves as best they may.

Most of the houses seem to have been cast in the same mould, but here and there the uniformity is broken by the mansion of a pope, or of a petty noble, in which a decidedly Asiatic style of architecture manifests itself. Every thing is light and airy, balconies and porticoes abound, with covered

courtyards, and numberless columns, though these are often nothing more than the roughly-hewn stems of trees. The popes generally plant trees before their houses, and there the old patriarchs may be seen, with their long venerable beards, seated in the shade, jesting with the children, or amusing themselves with the antics of a favourite cat, the invariable appendage of every householder in Little Russia. Though it be Saturday evening, you may fearlessly accost the priest, without the least apprehension of disturbing him in his meditations on the sermon of the morrow. The Russian pastor is too well versed in his *slushba* (service) to trouble himself about it beforehand. In the noble's yard a party of horses may be seen stamping the ground, or, perhaps an old carriage is undergoing the operation of cleaning, with a view to the next day's work.

Should there still be daylight enough, we may depend on finding some of the peasant women engaged in the weaving of carpets, for which the Southern Russian has an almost oriental fondness, and in the manufacture of which he displays both skill and taste. All Russia is supplied from these Malorossian villages with sledge-covers and carpets, which, in addition to the brightness and variety of their colours, have the additional recommendation of being extremely cheap.

As we proceed we descend more and more into the ravine in which the village is built. The path is mostly of a boggy character, and seldom quite dry. Sometimes you sink into a mass of dung, for which the farmers in this part of the world know no better use than to repair their roads. At the bottom of the ravine is almost always a large pond, and here all the parts of their little locality seem to meet as at a common centre. This road leads to the church, that to the inn, and a third to the chief magistrate's house. The pond is full of dirty water, from which millions of frogs raise their plaintive cries to heaven, frogs being more numerous about such a village than even the dogs and wolves. Flights of geese and ducks, half-wild and half-domesticated, hover around the pond, encircled often by a complete forest of reeds. We meet a fellow, and ask him the way to the bazaar or market-place, but he is a *kasak*, or freeman, and therefore privileged to be insolent, so we must not be surprised if his answer be deficient in courtesy;—indeed the Malorossian, even when a serf, has none of that native politeness which characterizes the lowest classes in Central Russia. Nevertheless, we find our way to the bazaar, where we see the merchants of the community ensconced in their little wooden booths, in which are displayed for sale—tallow, honey, chalk, carpets, ropes, nails, hatchets, sunflower-seeds, cucumbers, and a multitude of other articles in constant demand in a Russian village. Should it happen to be Sunday, and divine service over, more than half the population of the place will be found assembled here, particularly the elders of the community, with their long beards, their white trousers tucked into their high boots, their black sheepskin caps rising loftily from their heads, their persons enveloped in capacious brown woollen cloaks, collected together in groups, and as they all stand leaning on their long staves, they might not inaptly be taken for so many ancient philosophers, discoursing on the emptiness of sublunary affairs.

In the house of the magistrate, two of these venerable figures, the *Ataman* and his deputy, will generally be found ready to decide in a summary manner every dispute that may arise. In an inner room we hear, perhaps, a fearful noise, which, on inquiry, we find proceeds from a

couple of drunken rascals, who have been guilty of some outrage, for which they are to receive the chastisement due, as soon as they are sober. The *ataman* of the village acts, at the same time, as postmaster. He can seldom write, but he has his *pissar* in an adjoining room, a learned man, who is able to spell out the passport and other papers of a traveller, though not with sufficient expedition to satisfy the latter, who, meanwhile, is cursing at the delay to which he is subjected, and is impatiently bawling out for horses. The horses come at last, a whole herd of them driven in by a mounted herdsman, and half of them are then quickly harnessed before the carriage.

At the public-house opposite, it would indeed be a wonder if we did not find every bench thronged with guests, for temperance is no prevailing virtue in Little Russia. The spectacle here presented is any thing but a gratifying one. The brandy flows in torrents. The people drink it out of large glass tumblers, or, perhaps, out of the tin measure in which it is served out to them. Quarrellings and fightings are not, indeed, of frequent occurrence, but the scenes which do take place are not on that account less disgusting. Perhaps a couple of drunken women are laughing and singing aloud, while several old fellows are vainly endeavouring to join in the melody, but are too far gone to do more than articulate an occasional grunt. Half-a-dozen natives of Great Russia are, at the same time, perhaps, embracing, kissing, and hugging each other with maudlin tenderness, and some German vagabond, dropped here by Napoleon's army, announces, by his fiery nose and sunken eyes, the degrading species of slavery into which he has sunk. Among all this noisy rabble may be seen the host, the pale, meager, bearded, ever sober Jew, who sells his poison in the name of some noble; for the sale of spirits, which in Great Russia is farmed out to merchants, is in Little Russia the unenviable privilege of the local nobility.

Not to leave the place with so disagreeable an impression on our minds, let us seek the village church ere we return homeward. We may rely on finding it the handsomest building in the place. It is always kept in good repair, and looks generally as if it had just been built. The most highly-esteemed among its sacred pictures, you may be sure, was discovered miraculously suspended to some tree not far off, and now the hundred nobles, the thousand *kasakki*, and the two thousand *panski ludi* of the village, rarely omit, on each returning Sunday, to pay their devotions to the wonderful picture. The church stands generally alone on a little eminence, on which it is visible from every part of the village, and from the church-door, on a Sunday, as you gaze down into the moving world below, you may sometimes behold delightful and diverting pictures of Russian life. Young girls, and matrons with infants on their arms, come climbing up to, the holy place; and to my mind, the man must be but a sorry Christian who would scorn to enter the sacred edifice and join the pious Cossacks in their prayers to Heaven.

#### POLTAVA.

The Dnieper serves to divide into two sections the populous region fertilized by its waters, and of these two sections the eastern constitutes the government of Kieff, and the western that of Poltava. Considering that the latter contains a population of nearly two millions, we might cer-



tainly expect to find in the chief city, a place of greater importance, but Poltava bears about the same proportion to the government of the same name, that St. Petersburg, at no very remote period, did to the whole empire. All the nobles who are not prevented from doing so, by some urgent business, or some official appointment, live upon their own estates or in the villages. The Malorossians, indeed, are seldom fond of a town life, and above all things they entertain a great aversion to St. Petersburg. The Moscovites dislike St. Petersburg also, but then they dislike it chiefly on account of its foreign character. The Malorossians dislike it not merely on that account, but also for the many Great Russian elements in which it abounds. There are noble families in Little Russia, who have visited almost every capital in Europe, and yet never set foot in St. Petersburg.

Such is the aversion of the people of Little to those of Great Russia, that it may fairly be described as a national hatred, and the feeling has rather strengthened than diminished since the seventeenth century, when the country was annexed to the Moscovite empire. The Malorossian, to this day, sympathizes more with the Pole than he does with the Moscovite.

Before their subjection, all the Malorossians were freemen, and serfdom, they maintain, had never been known among them. It was the Russians they say that reduced one-half of the people to slavery. During the first century after the union, Little Russia continued to have her own hetmans, and retained much of her ancient constitution and privileges, but all these have been swept away by the retrograde reforms of the last and present century. Even the name of Malo-Rossiia has, since 1837, been abolished, and occurs no longer in any official document. Till that year, there had been a governor-general of Little Russia, but the office has been done away with, and the former inscription over the government hotel at Poltava has been effaced. This has given great offence to the nobles of the land, and a stranger will not be long among them without hearing bitter complaints on the subject.

Another grievance is the tobacco monopoly lately established, and which has knocked up a source of great revenue to the Malorossians, and particularly to the kasakki, or free peasants, who formerly supplied the greater part of the empire with the fragrant weed. The only privilege, in short, that the nobles have retained, is that of making and selling spirits, which in Great Russia is likewise a government monopoly, and which in Little Russia has been extended to the cities, but not to the villages. Perhaps this last remaining privilege is the one which a sincere and intelligent patriot would be most desirous to see done away with. In the Russian sense of the word, the people of Little Russia have very little patriotism, for they manifest but little sympathy for that blind devotion to their emperors, so characteristic of the Moscovites.

Little Russia was formerly a republic under the protection of Poland, and the nobles preserve still many tokens of their golden age of independence. In many houses will be found portraits of all the Khmelnitzkis, Mazeppas, Skoropatzkis, and Rasumoffskis, who, at various times have held the dignity of hetman, and manuscripts relating to those days are carefully treasured up. The history of Little Russia is a field that has been as yet but little explored, but a western European who visits the country will be surprised at the abundance of historical recollections with

which every part of the country is full. Malorossian histories cannot indeed be always printed, but there is no scarcity of ancient chronicles, written by native historians, manuscript copies of which will be found in the house of almost every noble of consequence.

One history, that of Bantysh-Kamenski, in four volumes, has been printed, and is said to have stood in close relation to the abortive insurrection of 1825. This work enjoys great popularity. It is written in a bold style, and could never have been published, except during the comparatively mild reign of Alexander. The book flatters the national vanity and prejudices of the Malorossians, but in other respects its merit is of a very secondary order, for it is full of false views, and unsupported assertions.

Of the manuscript histories of Little Russia, that of Kanieffski, bishop of Voronesh, is the most important. It brings the chronicles of the country down to the reign of the Empress Catherine. This book is written in the Malorossian dialect, and in far too frank and liberal a style to admit of its being printed; but for all that, there are few estates on which a copy of the work may not be found, and Kanieffski is everywhere a favourite and well-known author.

Should the colossal empire of Russia one day fall to pieces, there is little doubt but the Malorossians will form a separate state. They have their own language, their own historical recollections, seldom mingle or intermarry with their Moscovite rulers, and are in number already more than 10,000,000. Their national sinews may be said to lie among the rural nobility living in the villages, from among whom every great political movement has hitherto emanated.

Among the families in Little Russia that have been favoured by the emperors, none has been more distinguished than that of the Rasumoffskis. Fieldmarshal Rasumoffski, the brother of Elizabeth's favourite, was made hetman of the country by Catherine, and was the last who held that dignity. Catherine made him a gift of the city of Baturin, on the Dnieper, formerly the residence of the hetmans, and he received from her so many tokens of her bounty, that at last he became the owner of no less than 140,000 souls; and, as in reckoning this description of property the male souls only are taken into the account, it follows that the marshal must have held nearly 300,000 human beings in a state of slavery. In the palace of Baturin, it is moreover said, immense treasures were found, which had been accumulated there unknown to the government, but which all passed into the hands of Rasumoffski. At his death this vast property was divided among his heirs, whose *liberal expenditure*, in sundry of our European capitals, in a short time reduced the wealth of the family within more reasonable limits.

Fortunes indeed are dissipated in Russia with the same rapidity with which they are sometimes accumulated. There exists no law of entail; and as all children have an equal claim to the inheritance of their father, the large fortunes rarely continue long without being broken up into fragments.

The city of Poltava stands on an elevation on the banks of the Vorskla, by the side of a ravine, into which a part of the city descends. The little old town still occupies the same ground that it did in Peter the Great's time, and is separated by a large open space from the new suburbs that have grown up around, and are now of much greater extent than the

city itself. The field of battle lies to the north-east. It is a perfectly level plateau, about two leagues long and one league broad, terminating towards the city and towards the river, in abrupt precipices 150 feet in height. In the centre of the field stands now a small hillock, 60 feet high, and 150 paces in circumference, under which lie interred the remains of those who perished in that memorable battle. On the summit stands a cross with the following inscription: "But of Peter know ye, that life was of little moment to him, if Russia but lived glorious and prosperous." These words are said to have been uttered by Peter to some of his generals who came to congratulate him on the issue of the battle.

From the summit of this hill the whole field may be easily surveyed. There is not another inequality in any part of the ground, if we except the remains of the intrenchments that surrounded the Russian camp. Upon the whole field there stands neither a house nor a tree. At the extremity of the field lies a convent which the Swedes occupied during the battle. On the northern verge is a deep ravine, through which winds a slow dirty tributary of the Vorskla, and to their ignorance of the existence of this ravine, the Swedes may ascribe the loss of the day. The beginning of the battle went quite in their favour, the whole Russian cavalry was flying before that of the Swedes, and had the latter pursued the fugitives a few hundred paces farther, the whole Russian cavalry must have been precipitated into that ravine where they would never have been able to rally; but the Swedes knew nothing of the ravine, and desisted from the pursuit when they had arrived within a few hundred yards of its brink. The Russians were allowed to recover from their panic, and finished by winning the battle.

To the Ukraine and Little Russia, the battle of Poltava was followed by the most decisive consequences. Their hopes of independence were crushed, and Peter proceeded with relentless barbarity against those of their nobles who had manifested a wish to throw off the Muscovite yoke. The Swedish and German officers who fell into his hands were entertained with princely magnificence, while the whole field was covered with the bodies of the Cossacks and Malorossians who perished by the hand of the executioner. Some were impaled, some hanged, and others, after having had all their limbs broken on the wheel, were left to writhe in hopeless agony about the instruments of torture. These executions were succeeded by confiscations, and by the withdrawal of privileges. To this day, the battle of Poltava is remembered throughout Little Russia, with feelings similar to those with which the battle of the White Mountain is remembered in Bohemia,

Within the city stands a monument of the battle. It consists of a metal column, forty feet high, made of the Swedish arms taken on the occasion. The pedestal is of granite, and on each of the four sides are planted three Swedish cannon, which would not seem to speak much for the accuracy of Voltaire, who gravely tells us that Charles XII. had only four guns left when he arrived before Poltava. This monument was erected in 1809, in celebration of the centenary of the battle.

And here, before we close, let us look back on the period that has elapsed since that battle, and contemplate for a moment what Russia had since done in the space of little more than a century. Within that period 120 new cities have been erected, where before all had been a desert; and



among these cities, we must not forget St. Petersburg with 500,000, and Odessa with 70,000 inhabitants. Indeed, almost every city in the empire may be said to have been constructed anew. Canals to the extent of at least 100 (450 English) miles have been cut; 120 hospitals have been built; and six universities have been founded. An army of a million of soldiers has been drilled, and an army of civil officers of at least 160,000 has been organized. Several thousands of churches have been built; a fleet has been formed, second only to that of England; a dozen fortresses have been constructed; and a population of 20,000,000 has been added to the empire by conquest alone. Codes of laws have been published, and a national literature has sprung up. Manufactories have arisen and flourished; mines have been opened in six several chains of mountains; and a wish for improvement has been awakened over an extent of 300,000 (German) square miles; a tract, moreover, which, as far as history reaches, had ever been sunk in the darkest barbarism. All this, and much more, has been absolutely created in the country, where not a trace of it existed before. Leaving out of the account those portions of their task in which the Russians have failed, and not perhaps criticising too closely the quality of the work they have produced, it may boldly be asserted, that at no period of the history of the world, have equal results been produced by any European state, within the same time.

THE END.





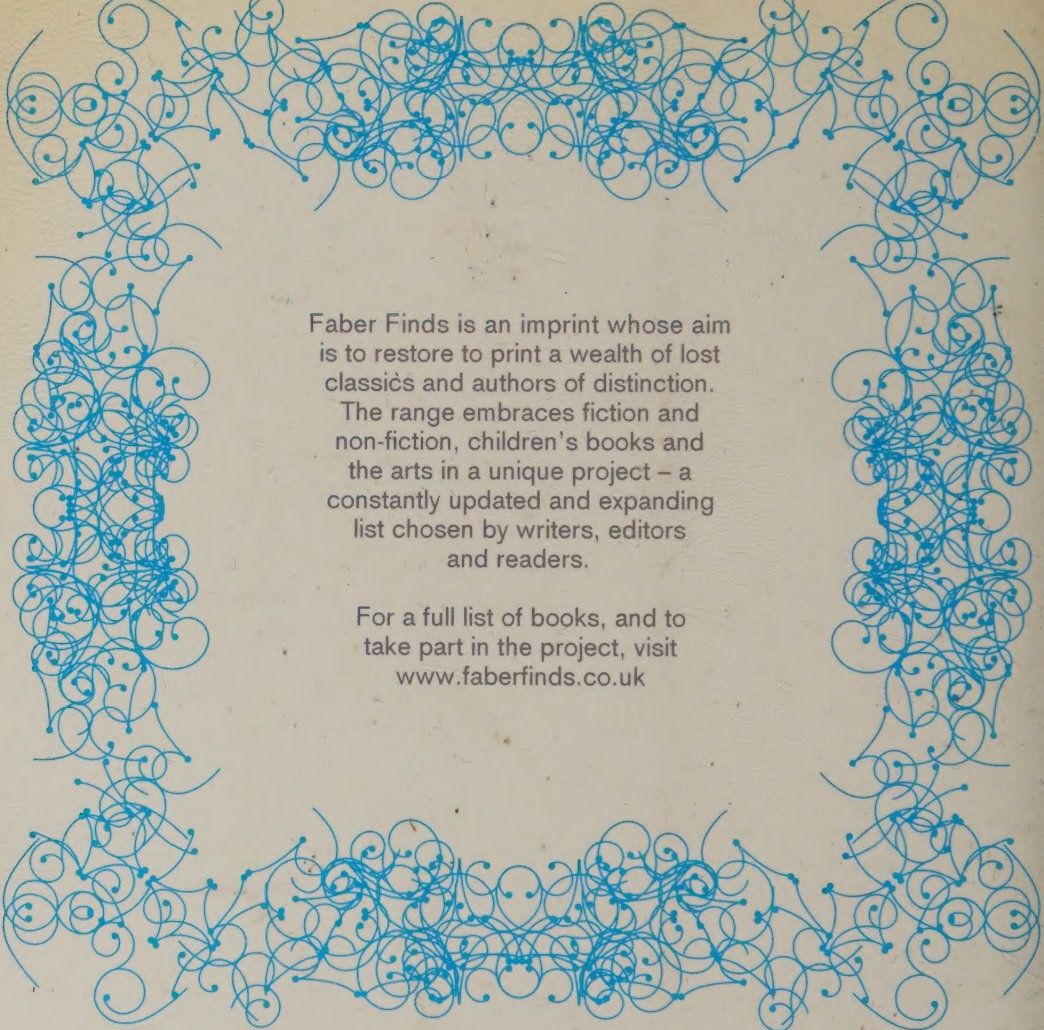












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